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THE PUZZLED CENSUS-TAKER.

BY JOHN G. SAXE.

"Got any boys?" the Marshal said
 To a lady from over the Rhine;
And the lady shook her flaxen head,
 And civilly answered, "*Nine!*"*

"Got any girls?" the Marshal said
 To the lady from over the Rhine;
And again the lady shook her head,
 And civilly answered, "*Nine!*"

"But some are dead?" the Marshal said
 To the lady from over the Rhine;
And again the lady shook her head,
 And civilly answered, "*Nine!*"

"Husband, of course?" the Marshal said
 To the lady from over the Rhine;
And again she shook her flaxen head,
 And civilly answered, "*Nine!*"

"The d——l you have!" the Marshal said
 To the lady from over the Rhine;
And again she shook her flaxen head,
 And civilly answered, "*Nine!*"

"Now what do you mean by shaking your head,
 And always answering '*Nine?*'"
"*Ich kann nicht Englich!*" civilly said
 The lady from over the Rhine.

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* *Nein*, pronounced *nine*, is the German for "*No.*"

MAGGIE BURNS,

THE HEROINE OF THE DELAWARE.

A STORY OF AMERICAN HEARTS OF '76.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

CHAPTER X.

THE HAY-STACKS.

As soon as they reached the point where the rest of the party were in waiting, the bandage was removed from the prisoner's mouth, and he was allowed to take breath. He gasped awhile as though his lungs had become well nigh exhausted; but by and by he breathed more freely, and seemed to take some note of things about him. When Roderic saw this, he drew a pistol, and pointed it at the man's head.

"Saul Abbeford," he said, in a tone which could bear but one interpretation, "listen to me: I am an officer, commissioned by the commander-in-chief of the Federal Army, and all that I now do, I do under express orders. I know that you are in league with the Tories, and that you know many of their secrets. In short, I know just about how far your information extends; and I am going to question you. If you answer me promptly, all may be well; but if you refuse, you die! Now mark me well: I would shoot you as quickly as I would shoot any enemy of my country; and, if you give me cause, the deed shall be done. You see these companions of mine: There isn't one of them but that would consider it a fit work to put a stop to your treasonable life."

"Just give me the word," muttered Walter Slack, "and I'll show him how quickly a Tory can be disposed of!"

It was not in the nature of Saul Abbeford to be brave in the presence of mortal danger; and when he saw the meaning of those who now gathered about him, his knees shook, and his teeth chattered.

"Will you answer the questions I shall ask you?" demanded Roderic.

The fellow didn't know. Coward as he was, he had something else to fear beside the doom which his captors threatened. There were others who were interested, and whose vengeance might fall upon him if he betrayed them.

"You can do as you please," said Roderic, with that sort of quietness which marks a mortal determination; "only you may be assured of this: If you do not onswer me, your life-blood shall be emptied out upon this frozen ground! I hope you understand me."

The trembling wretch cast another glance around upon the grim men who environed him, and he could see their faces plainly enough through the gloom to read his fate thereon. Then he looked upon his interlocutor, and said:

"You can ask your questions, sir."

"Exactly, and I must do it in a hurry, too; so you will be prompt with your answers. Now mark me. I know that a man, calling himself Major Whittlesly, an officer in the British service, is in this region, raising men to serve under Cornwallis. I further know that this officer has been several times with John Glengyle. And, further still, I know that you have been to and fro, between Waldvale Hall and this Whittlesly's quarters, with messages. Mind you—I know all this. And now I ask you—Where is Major Whittlesly quartered? Where is his rendezvous?"

Abbeford hesitated, and trembled; and finally he swore that he knew nothing about it.

"Ah," said Roderic, with a significant shake of the head, "you were too long in making up that story. I know that you lie, sir! You do know where the Tory rendezvous is; and if you do not tell me, you are a dead man."

Perhaps the fellow thought that his fate might be equally hard if he did tell. Our hero divined the meaning of the hesitating look, and quickly added.

"But, if you answer me promptly and truly, you shall have nothing to fear from the Tories. I pledge you this."

"Don't fire your pistol, captain," said Tower, moving a step nearer to the prisoner. "The noise might alarm the folks at the hall. I have a rope with me, and we'll hang the rascal up to this tree."

"That's the talk," cried Slack. "Give me the halter, and I'll have the chap's neck on the stretch before he has time to think."

"Very well," responded Roderic. "We can't stand parlying. On with it."

Upon this Walter Slack seized the prisoner by the shoulders, and bore him down with a force that threatened to crush every bone in his body. In a moment more the noose was around his neck, and the running part of the rope thrown over a stout limb.

"Mercy! mercy!" shrieked the poor wretch, as he felt the halter tighten. "Oh, don't murder me! For God's sake, don't!"

"Then answer me," said Roderic, sternly. "Answer at once, and to the point, or you swing from that limb within the next minute. I pledge you my very life that I mean just what I say!"

Saul Abbeford was not proof against this kind of argument, and his opposition gave way.

"I will tell—I will tell," he cried. "Loosen the rope, and I'll tell you all."

The noose was loosened, and the man then answered the questions which had been put to him:

"Major Whittlesly is only six miles from here. You know where Copp's Meadow is?"

"Yes."

"And you know that the river is upon one side, and a piece of thick woods upon the other?"

"Yes. I have hunted in those woods often enough."

"Upon that meadow, close by the woods, are two large stacks of hay, right upon the piles where Copp has stacked his hay for years."

"Yes—I remember them."

"Well," pursued Abbeford, lowering his voice, and glancing around with a trembling look, "those two stacks of hay aren't honest. They are only shell-works of hay, with room inside for a hundred men!"

"And there we shall find the major?"

"There are his quarters, sir."

"One thing more: How many men has he there?"

"I don't know exactly, but it can't be far from fifty."

"And do you know what movement they are to make?"

"They are to act here as they are needed, and stand by to join the British army when it crosses the Delaware."

"You have seen Major Whittlesly to-day."

Abbeford hesitated.

"Don't be foolish," said our hero. "You have answered me thus far well, and you had better not upset the dish at this stage. I know that you have been to Whittlesly's quarters. Did you see him?"

"Yes."

"And you told him of the arrest of Griswold's men?"

"Yes."

"What movement does he propose to make in consequence thereof?"

But the man could not answer this.

"I only know," he said, "that the major was very much worked up about it; and he hopes he may get hold of you; but I didn't understand what he meant to do."

"Had Captain Griswold been there?"

"No, sir."

A few more questions, and then Roderic was ready to act. Master Saul Abbeford proposed that, since he had given all the information he possessed, they should suffer him to depart; but our hero had a different proposition.

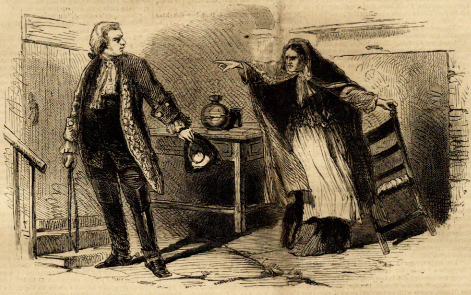
"Not quite," he said, after the fellow had made known his wish. "I may find that you have made a mistake; or, I may want some further information. No, I cannot spare you yet, you must go with us;—so don't make any objections.——Will you take charge of him, Slack?"

The herculean Ranger said he would; and from that moment Saul Abbeford was in safe keeping.

Roderic carried a reliable repeater in his pocket, and upon referring to it he found that it struck only the first quarter past ten.

"Had I thought of this," he said, turning to his lieutenant, "I would have taken my whole company with me; but it may be as well as it is, for now I can get more men. By midnight I can be in Newtown; and by two o'clock I can be he here again, with as many companions as we need; and from here to Copp's meadow is an easy tramp for two hours more. Thus, if no ill luck befalls us, we may accomplish the whole before daylight. A mile from here, on the Newtown road there is a man whom I can trust. Follow me, and let us make all possible haste."

[ENTERED ACCORDING TO ACT OF CONGRESS, IN THE YEAR 1861, BY ROBERT BONNER, IN THE CLERK'S OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK.]



THE MANIAC AND THE VILLAIN.

At the edge of the Waldvale estate stood a small cot, occupied by an honest peasant named Cox. Here the party stopped; and, having procured the host's horse, Roderic ordered his companions to remain there until he returned. The ride to head-quarters was performed in less than half an hour; and ere long the Patriot captain had forty stout, well armed men ready to follow him. He did not see Mercer, as that individual was with the commander-in-chief. However, the Rangers were all ready for him, and understood that they were subject to his orders.

It was but an hour past midnight when our hero reached the peasant's cot on his return; and, without any delay, master Saul Abbeford was brought forth, and the whole party then started for Copp's Meadow. Four miles of the route was on the highway, to the northeast; after which they struck off towards the Delaware, by a rough cart-path. It was a dubious way, through the woods and bushes; but Roderic had followed the track so often with his rifle, that he led on as confidently as though he had been upon the high-road. By and by he reached the point where the path opened upon the meadow, and here he stopped. At no great distance, revealed against the leaden sky, he could see the top of one of the hay-stacks. The other one was to the left, and further in toward the wood. Of course there must be a sentinel posted somewhere. The captain sought his prisoner, and questioned him upon this point.

"I suppose they have a sentinel," replied Abbeford, in no very good humor.

"My dear sir," said Roderic, with his hand upon the fellow's shoulder; "you will just bear this one thing in mind: If you deceive me now, or if you refuse to answer me as I wish, your life shall pay the penalty. You can make your choice. Now where is this sentinel posted?"

"He is between here and the stack," returned Abbeford speaking with becoming celerity.

"Which stack?"

"The one directly ahead."

"Is there no sentinel at the other stack?"

"No, sir. There is no men in that one yet."

Roderic was confident that the man spoke the truth, for his manner told that he was acting under mortal fear.

"Mr. Tower," he said, addressing his lieutenant, "you will take charge of this fellow awhile, and remain here with the men, while I take Slack with me to look after the sentinel. We won't be gone long."

Our hero then took the stout Ranger with him, and as they walked along, he explained the manner in which he intended to proceed.

"You understand me?"

"Perfectly," replied Slack. And as he spoke, he turned up the cuffs of his coat, and drew forth the stout bandage with which Saul Abbeford's mouth had been stopped.

"Then come on. I don't think we'll find much trouble."

The hay-stack was some forty or fifty rods from the edge of the wood, but the night was so dark that only that part of it could be seen which lifted itself up against the sky. In a little while something like the outline of a man was seen, only a few yards off, and directly came the challenge:

"Who comes there?"

"It's me—*Saul Abbeford*," returned Roderic, imitating the voice of that individual as nearly as possible. "I have brought a man from Sir John. We've got orders from Cornwallis."

While speaking thus, in broken sentences, both Roderic and his companion had been advancing; and the sentinel, who could not distinguish features, evidently had no suspicion of anything out of the way. He bore his firelock at a charge, but was not in a direct position to use it. Walter Slack, with his eye fixed and his fist clenched, sprang forward, and knocked the man down without ceremony; and, within the space of half a dozen beats of the pulse, the bandage was on, and securely tied; after which the fellow was picked up and borne swiftly away to the wood.

The same inducements which had been held out to Saul Abbeford were held out to the captured sentinel; and when he was fully convinced that there was but one earthly way by which his life could be saved, he was not slow to follow it. He served the royal cause for pay, and the saving of his own life was a service nearer to his heart than serving the king. He was somewhat astonished that the secret of the hay-stacks had been obtained by outsiders, and was rather inquisitive to know how it had been done; but Roderic could not stop to enlighten him upon this point. He wished to obtain information, and the prisoner would do well to proceed at once with what he had to communicate.

How was it at the hay-stack?

The sentinel said that Major Whittlesly was there, and that he had fifty-eight men with him. The place could easily accommodate a hundred.

Were any of them on watch within?

In all probability there was one. If there were any others awake, it would be by accident.

With this information our hero marshalled his men, and, with the captured sentinel in charge, proceeded towards the point of attack; Master Saul Abbeford being stoutly bound, hand and foot, and left to himself. The stack, when it was reached, proved to be a huge affair of outside show; but then no larger than usual; for, in years before, Mr. Copp had frequently had from fifty to a hundred tons of hay in one of these stacks, lying by for the spring market in Philadelphia. The place of entrance was pointed out; but whithin the covering of hay was a stout door, which might be fastened upon the inside. The hay was pushed aside, and the door was tried; and then Roderic knocked upon it with his knuckles. The inner guard seemed to take it for granted that this was the picket sentinel come upon some errand; for he opened the door without question.

As Roderic Glengyle leaped into the place, after he had knocked the sentinel down, he beheld a scene that was odd, if it was not grand. The interior of the stack presented the appearance of a vast dome, some sixty feet in diameter at the base, and rising to the apex in fair proportions. An intricate network of slabs and rafters and cross-beams supported the covering of hay; and from one of the long braces hung two large lamps, the flames of which cast an uncertain glare over the place. The flooring was of rough boards, covered thickly with hay; and the men lay around upon the outside, with their feet pointing inward. Upon the side nearly opposite the entrance was a small camp bedstead, which our hero concluded belonged to the Major.

"Hallo! Hallo!" shouted the Patriot leader, as his men began to gather about him, with their muskets ready for use. "Arouse here! What ho!—Major Whittlesly!"

"How now?" cried the Major, leaping from his bed. "What is all this?" he added, rubbing his eyes. "Who are you?"

"In the name of George Washington, I command you to surrender!" said Roderic, advancing a step towards the Briton. "The first man of you who moves from his place, or raises a weapon, dies on the spot!"

The Tories were by this time all upon their feet; and when they saw the stout forms of the armed men who filled the place, they showed no disposition to resist. Their arms were not by them, and half of them were not wholly dressed.

"Save me as much trouble as you can, sir," pursued our hero, as soon as he saw that all was safe. "Give me your sword, and you shall suffer no further indignity."

"This is young Glengyle?" said the major, who could now see straight.

"Yes," replied Roderic; "and if you know anything of me, you will know how to behave now."

Major Whittlesly was too much of a soldier not to see that the best plan both for himself and for his men was to surrender at once. Still he wished to know the terms.

"I shall take you to the American camp," said Roderic; "and there the commander-in-chief will dispose of you as he may see proper. Of course I can make no stipulations. Only let me say this: You will act your own pleasure."

The Briton gave one more look at the array of stalwart Rangers, and then he handed his sword to the Patriot commander. The prisoners, fifty-eight in number, were bound together in couples, and marched out from their quarters; and as soon as the line could be formed, Roderic gave the order for starting. Whittlesly was very anxious to know how his secret had been discovered, but our hero did not choose to enlighten him. However, when they reached the wood, and Master Saul Abbefore was picked up, the crestfallen major began to see for himself.

An hour before daylight Roderic Glengyle reported himself to General Mercer; and when the prisoners had been taken care of, they both went to the quarters of the commander-in-chief, whom they found already up. Washington rejoiced greatly in the young captain's success, and was warm and generous in his thanks and encomiums. Had he any favor to ask?

"Only this," replied Roderic: "In the coming struggle, which I believe cannot be far distant, I would like to lead the brave men who have followed me this night."

"My dear captain, it shall be so. The struggle is not far distant, as you believe. On the day after to-morrow I set the ball in motion. Until then you will hold yourself in readiness to answer orders at any moment."

A proud hour was that for Roderic Glengyle. What a pity that his peace of mind should have been distracted by gloom in another quarter!

CHAPTER XI.

SIR JOHN INVESTIGATES.

John Glengyle arose in the morning, and eat his breakfast, and then sent for Saul Abbeford, but no Saul Abbeford was to be found. He waited half an hour, and then caused another search to be made, but with no better result.

"Cato, have you seen Abbeford this morning?"

"No, Mas'r."

"Did you see him last night?"

"Couldn't say for sartin, mas'r, but I rudder s'pec's I did. I t'ou't I seed him go off out ob doors jus' 'fore I went to bed."

"Don't you know where he went?"

"No, mas'r. He don't tell dis chile whar he's a gwine."

"He may have gone off to the meadow."

"Whar's dat, mas'r?"

"No matter. Go and take another look. Inquire of all the servants."

Cato went away, and at the end of fifteen minutes he came back with his answer. The man was not to be found.

"He went to bed last night?" said Sir John.

"Sartin he did, mas'r. His bed am all smashed up, jus' as if he'd turned out in a hurry. Mebbe he was took wid a headache, or sumf'n ob dat sort."

The host was not in a mood for speculating, so he returned to his private room, where he spent the next five minutes in wondering what could have become of his body-servant, and then five more in cursing the fate which had deprived him of said servant just at that particular time. Of this cursing, however, the fates did not receive the whole. Master Abbeford himself came in for a goodly share of it.

"I must go down there," said John Glengyle, talking with himself, as he stood in the centre of the room. "I must go if I go alone. I must see that woman to-day. I saw her once, and her countenance looked too familiar. And her story, too, as I have been able to pick it up from the shreds of common report, does not sound as I would have it. She made her appearance in this country at a peculiar time, and she was picked up at sea, too. At all events, it is so said. I must see her. I'll make a bold dash of it, and pay her a visit at once."

He had evidently desired that Saul Abbeford should accompany him, perhaps for greater safety in travelling; but, as that individual was not to be found, he finally concluded to go alone, so he ordered his horse, and was soon on his way. When he reached the widow's cot he dismounted, and rapped upon the door, which summons was answered by Scipio.

"I have heard," said Sir John, in a very cool, business-like way, "that the woman called Hecuba is stopping here."

Scipio admitted that it was so.

"Well," said the baronet, "I have a curiosity to see her. "Look to my horse while I go in."

The negro hesitated. He did not like this arrangement, and he was free to say so.

"Why, you poor old child, what are you afraid of?" cried Glengyle. "Look to my horse, I say."

"But, mas'r, Hecuba is sometimes afeared ob strangers. She isn't berry well."

"Then I may be able to help her. But," continued the visitor, lowering his tone a little, "you have nothing to fear. If the woman is afraid of me, I'll leave her at once. Now let me have no more words. Come and hold my horse."

Scipio did not like the idea, but still he dared not disobey. He feared that open resistance to John Glengyle might make it worse both for himself and for Hecuba, so, without further remonstrance, he came out and suffered the baronet to go in.

Hecuba was sitting by the fire, and as the new-comer entered she raised her eyes.

"Who are you?" she asked. His face was shaded, and she could not see it plainly.

"I am one who would befriend you, my good woman," replied Sir John. And as he spoke he took a seat near her.

She had been gazing into the bright fire so long that her pupils had become exceedingly contracted, but they gradually dilated as she turned her eyes upon her visitor, and finally she was able to see him distinctly. She leaned further forward, and gazed upon him intently.

"Ah," she uttered, in a low, long-drawn whisper, "thou art the monstrous Greek. Thy name is Achilles!" Her hands were clasped, her eyes began to burn with strange intensity, and the shadows of deep passion were manifesting themselves upon her brow.

John Glengyle, meanwhile, was not less intent in his examination of her. He gazed upon her until he had traced every lineament of her face, and then he seemed to be satisfied.

"I mean you no harm, good Hecuba," he said, soothingly.

"*Harm!*" she cried, bitterly. "O, thou dastard Greek—thou infernal champion! The gods were mad when they suffered thy father to rescue thee from the flames! Had thy mother burnt thee up when she cast thee upon the fire, the world would have been the gainer. O! out upon thee! miserable, dastard, coward wretch! I spit upon thee! I spurn thee! O, angels and guardians of mercy, help the Trojan mother now! I see him!—I know him! He slew my son!—*he!*—HE!"

She had started up from her chair; her fingers clutching at the empty air, and her face livid with bursting passion; and as she raved on, growing more and more terrible in her fury, John Glengyle hastened from the room. In the entry he met Scipio, who was just coming in; and he told him that he wished to speak with him a moment out of doors. The woman was sobbing violently, and the negro was not disposed to leave the cot again.

"I must see to her," he said. "She'll be quiet when she sees me."

"Very well," returned Sir John, who did not seem inclined to press his request; "but wait a moment. Is the woman subject to such wild fits? Does she have them very often?"

Had the negro stopped to reflect, he might have spoken differently; but the sobs of his poor charge, now falling into deep moans, so distracted his attention that he had time only for the simple truth.

"No, sir," he answered. "She don't hab 'em at all like dis."

"Something must ail her, then. Perhaps she doesn't like strangers?"

"Some times she doesn't."

"Well—go in and look to her, and if you need any help, let me know. I should be pleased to assist her if it lay in my power."

With this Scipio went into the little sitting-room, while John Glengyle mounted his horse and rode away.

"There is no mistake about that," the baronet muttered to himself, as his horse came to a walk in the wood. "If that isn't Helen Glengyle, then my eyes do much deceive me. And she hasn't altered so much as would at first sight appear. No—in spite of all her hardships she still bears much of the same old face. By the powers that rule us, she must not come any nearer to me! I'm afraid of her!"

He spurred up his horse, still muttering to himself as he rode; and when he reached the hall, he shut himself up in his own room for an hour or more. When he came out to dinner he inquired again for Saul Abbeford; but that individual had not yet returned. A little while afterwards Capt. Louis Griswold made his appearance, accompanied by an old acquaintance; and the three repaired to the drawing-room, while a second dinner was being prepared.

This acquaintance, who had come with Griswold, was an elderly gentleman named Andros, belonging in Philadelphia, and by profession a physician. He had been in America but a few years, and was a Loyalist of the most stubborn kind; and so free had he been in the expression of his sentiments against the course of the Continental Congress, that he had found it necessary to take a sudden departure from the federal capitol. He was on his way to New York, and had stopped to see his friend, the baronet.

Sir John welcomed the doctor warmly, and told him that Waldvale Hall should be his home as long as he pleased.

"I cannot stop long," replied Andros, with a shake of the head. "That son of a gun in Philadelphia, whom they call Israel Putnam, is making that city extremely hot for King George's friends; and, since my arrival here, I learn from Griswold that this locality is not much better."

"We have some friends left," said Glengyle; "and ere long I hope to see our friends in the ascendency. Why can't you wait and return to Philadelphia with us?"

"Are you going thither?"

"Cornwallis will soon be there; and I shall probably go on just to see how the Rebel congress looks after its members are imprisoned."

"I don't know about that," returned Doctor Andros, shaking his head. "Some of these Rebel leaders are natural born tigers, and when they show their teeth, there's danger. I'd rather be out of their way."

"And yet," added Sir John, "tigers are captured after awhile. We are setting a trap for these fellows.——You will stop with me to-night?"

"Yes."

"Then you shall go out with me this evening and see old Whittlesly,—you remember him—the major?"

The doctor looked into his host's face, and then turned to Griswold.

"How is this?" he said, addressing the captain.

"It must be," replied Griswold, "that Sir John has not heard the news. Is it so, sir? Have you not been informed of what transpired last night?"

"Last night?" repeated the host, with a start. "What do you mean?"

"Have you heard nothing from Whittlesly since yesterday?"

"Nothing."

"Then you are behind the times, Sir John. That rascally nephew of yours gave him a call last night."

"Gave him a call!" cried the baronet, starting to his feet. "How do you mean? You don't mean that Roderic has taken him prisoner."

"Taken him and all his men," returned Griswold.

"Heavens and earth! that cannot be!"

"And yet so it is. Major Whittlesly and his whole command are safe in the American camp; and Roderic Glengyle took them in."

"But I cannot comprehend it. How was it?"

"I cannot explain it, sir. I saw a man this morning, who had just come from the neighborhood of the American camp, and he informed me of what had happened. He saw the prisoners, and also saw Saul Abbeford with them."

John Glengyle sank back into his chair, and for some moments he was too full for coherent speech. When he did speak, his language was impious, and his oaths deep and dreadful.

"It can't be helped now," said the doctor, soothingly. "Such things are the fortunes of war, and we must take them as they come."

"But," gasped the baronet, struggling with his passion, "to think that my own nephew—he whom I have raised and sheltered—should thus trample upon me! Yet, by the eternal heavens! he shall feel the weight of my revenge! As I live he shall suffer for this!" The speaker brought his clenched fist down upon his knee with mad energy; and then arose to his feet, and started across the room. While he was walking thus a servant came and announced that dinner was ready.

"Go, gentlemen," said Sir John. "Go get your dinners, and when you return I'll be more calm."

And he was true to his promise; for, when his guests came in from the dining-room, they found him as cool as could be. He was a little more stern than usual, and his fingers seemed to have got a habit of working nervously and involuntarily.

"You must excuse me," said Griswold, "for I have business to attend to. I must cross the Delaware to-night, if possible."

As he took his leave, the host followed him out into the hall.

"One word, Captain, before you go. I think we should undersand each other by this time. You are coming this way again?"

"Yes,—perhaps to-morrow."

"Then let us speak plainly, and to the point. Roderic Glengyle has severed the last bond of friendship and regard, and has made himself my enemy. He has insulted and wronged me. Aye—he has played the traitor most shamefully. Were he not of my blood I would slay him; and yet he should be put out of the way all the same. Is he not a most bitter enemy of yours?"

Griswold nodded his head, and ground his teeth.

"Has he not wronged you, Captain? Has he not crossed your path in an insulting manner?"

"Aye, Sir John; he hath."

"And have you thought of revenge?"

Griswold looked up into his interlocutor's face.

"Fear not," said the host. "If you will find him, and put an end to his traitorous life, you will please me."

"By the mass, sir," cried the captain, seizing the baronet's hand, "you shall be pleased. I have sworn that I will have Roderic Glengyle's life! And I have sworn another thing, too."

"Ah?"

"Yes,—another thing have I sworn. I will have the girl who hath so crossed me."

"Good, my Captain. Take her if you can."

And so ran the dispositions of those two men. Touching Roderic Glengyle and Maggie Burns neither had cause to fear opposition from the other.

After Griswold had gone, Sir John and the doctor sat together and chatted upon various matters, though most of their conversation related to the war. After supper the host broached a new subject. He approached it with seeming carelessness, and yet it had been upon his mind for a long time, and he had been quite anxious concerning it.

"Doctor," he said, "I want to ask you a question, simply to satisfy a bit of curiosity.—You have had some experience with insane people?"

"Yes," replied Andros. "I was for some years a medical visitor and adviser to the asylum of my native town."

"Well—the question is this: Can a confirmed lunatic recover her—or his, reason?"

"That depends altogether upon circumstances. Some very marked cases have been cured. Hereditary insanity is generally incurable;—I may say, absolutely so; but insanity caused by disease, or by some sudden convulsion of the nervous system, or by long suffering, may be cured. However, that depends, again, upon circumstances."

"Let us suppose a case," said Sir John. "Suppose a woman, for instance,—we'll take a young woman—say she is married, and has children—suppose such a woman, in company with her friends, meets with an accident;—we'll suppose it to be the overturning of a stage-coach, or the capsizing of a boat,—and her friends are all lost—husband, children, and all; but she, by almost a miracle, is saved. The calamity falls so heavily upon her that it upsets her reason, and she is perfectly insane. Now suppose that woman should live fifteen, or twenty years, insane all the time, could there be any possibility of her recovering her senses again?"

"Still, Sir John, that would depend upon circumstances. If her madness took a quiet, melancholy form, and the mental faculties were not rent and torn enough to destroy the brain, she might possibly recover. And yet, again, there is another line of circumstance. Should such a woman, during the quietness of her insanity, accumulate fat and become gross in form, her case would be a hopeless one; for one of two results would be sure to follow: The first, fever would surely prove fatal; or, she would finally become idiotic."

"But," pursued the host, "suppose the woman's mind still retained all its primitive freedom of action; suppose her passions were excited only by extraordinary circumstances, and even then that her feelings followed naturally the pleasant or the unpleasant association; that her face retained all its old lines of comeliness and intellect; and that her body only failed and wasted as any other body would from constant wandering?"

"I have known such cases to be cured," replied the doctor; "especially among females. I am not sure that I ever knew of a cure among males; for the masculine brain cannot bear so long and continued strain of suffering as can the female. Your true woman will bear up under trials that would kill a man. The wife can bear meekly and prayerfully that which would drive the husband mad. But, mind you, it is not medicine which can work the cure of such a person. If the relief from her insanity comes, it will come through some convulsion. A fit of sickness, accompanied by paroxysms of raving, which so completely exhaust the brain as to lull it to absolute repose, may, if it does not terminate fatally, terminate in the restoration of reason."

"Is that so?"

"Yes. And it is not uncommon. Of course, cases are rare of restoration where the insanity has continued so long as twenty years; but still, if the mental and physical circumstances are the same, the lapse of time would make no difference. You are aware that healthy flesh is made by the wasting away of the old substance, and the making of new."

Sir John nodded:

"Well—just so it is with the brain. When the long, severe sickness comes upon the insane woman, and her ravings become high and exhausting, her brain wastes more rapidly than any other part of the body; and absolute exhaustion must follow. At this stage death is most apt to be the result; but if, by fortunate chance, the system rises above the disease, the old malady may be gone, and the mind come forth clear and bright, as from a dream; for, in one sense, we may literally say, that a new brain has been made. Do you understand me?"

Yes—John Glengyle thought he did. At all events, he understood enough to fear that the insane woman at the cot, if she lived, might possibly regain her reason.

Would that do for him?

CHAPTER XII.

AN UNWILLING GUEST.

"No, no, Maggie—I do not think it safe. You had better not go."

"But I must go, mother. From what Roderic has said I am sure that poor Hecuba may need some assistance; and you know that Roderic cannot go. He told me this morning that he would go to-day and see the woman if he could; but his presence was required in the camp, and it was impossible for him to leave. I know that he feels a deep interest in her walfare—a very deep interest."

"Perhaps you think it is a strange interest," remarked the widow, eyeing her daughter curiously.

"Yes, mother—I do think it is a strange interest; and yet I have not questioned him concerning it; for I knew he would tell me in good time if it was anything proper for me to know. However, I feel a strange interest, too. Something tells me that I ought to go to our cot. There can be no danger. Roderic has captured all the Tories."

"Not all, Maggie. Louis Griswold is yet free."

"Ah—but he has gone over into Jersey. He crossed the river last evening."

"How do you know?"

"Roderic told me so this morning. Scouts were out all up and down the river, and he was seen; but it was too late to arrest him."

"And yet," argued the widow, "he may have returned ere this. He may have come back last night."

"Pooh! you are frightened, mother."

"Not frightened, my child; but I will own that I am fearful."

"Do not fear on my account. I assure you there can be no danger. It is not possible that there should be any. It seems to me as though Roderic wished that I should go."

"He did not ask you to do so?"

"No."

"He did not even hint at it?"

"Perhaps not; but yet I know that he feels uneasy touching Hecuba. I *know* that; and so I have made up my mind to go. Our faithful old horse will take me there, and bring me back, in perfect safety."

When Mrs. Burns found that her daughter was bent upon going, she ceased her remonstrances, and devoted her speech to words of counsel touching the journey. Maggie promised that she would be very careful; that she would not stop longer than she could possibly help; and that she would stop nowhere else; and after this she prepared for the trip. She wore a loose, blouse-like sack over her woollen dress, and beneath this, suspended by her belt, she concealed her pistols. They would not be much in her way, and they might be of service to her. It was an hour past noon when she was ready to set out; and having leaped upon the saddle, she gathered up the reins; and the horse, as if proud and happy to bear his young mistress once more, dashed off at his best gait.

Now, had Maggie asked herself why she was going upon this errand, she could have given herself no different answer from that which she had given her mother. She had seen Roderic that morning, and he had informed her that he was obliged to be in the camp all day, as preparations of the utmost importance were going forward, and his help was needed. And, furthermore, in an indirect way, and perhaps inadvertantly, he had revealed the fact that he was disappointed by this arrangement, because he had planned to visit Hecuba, who might possibly be in danger. The maiden had pondered over this considerably, and the result was all summed up in the few words which she spoke to herself after her course had been decided upon:

"I will go and see Hecuba myself; and if she is in danger, I will bring her back with me to good Moses Allen's."

To say that she felt no curiosity to know why Roderic was so deeply interested, would be to say that she was not a true woman. She did feel a curiosity in that direction—perhaps more than she was willing to acknowledge, even to herself; but it was not an idle curiosity. If she desired knowledge, it was that she might serve the man she so fondly loved.

It was a cold day, with dark, driving clouds coming up from the northwest; but Maggie was too familiar with such exposure to pay the weather any particular attention. When she reached the cot, she conducted the horse to the stable, and put him into his stall; and met old Scipio as she was coming back. He was very glad to see her—so glad that he hardly knew what to say; and he furthermore asserted that Hecuba would be glad to see her, too. And the negro had spoken truly; for when Maggie entered the cot, and the poor woman saw her sweet, kind, happy face, a new light beamed upon her own sorrow-worn countenance.

Hecuba called her **Andromache**, and said she was **Hector's** wife. How strange was her infatuation. And yet the fantasy was not an unpleasant one to Maggie. She knew that when the woman spoke of Hector, she meant Roderic Glengyle. She knew nothing of the history of the old Trojans; but she saw the fitness of the imagery, and she did not object to it; in fact, she rather encouraged it by acknowledging that she was Andromache, and that she had given her hand to Hector.

And so for a full hour did Maggie sit and listen to Hecuba's plaintive whisperings, never disputing her, but speaking words of love and cheer when she could. Not once did the poor maniac show anything like passion, her emotions being all subdued and melancholy. Finally she grew weary, and went away to her bed-room, after which Maggie was left alone with Scipio.

And now what should the maiden say? What should she ask? She wished to know much; and yet she shrank from bold questioning. She told Scipio that Roderic had called upon her that morning, and had spoken to her of the tenants of the cot.

"He wanted to come himself," she said, "but that was impossible. He said there might be danger to Hecuba; and though he did not ask me to come in his place, yet I felt that such was my duty. I thought I would come, and, if there should be need, both you and Hecuba would return with me to Newtown. How is it, good Scipio?"

In order to answer this, it was necessary that the old negro should bring in the name of John Glengyle, and in doing so he related the incidents of the baronet's visit on the day before.

This story served to startle Maggie, and to awaken a new wonder. Why did Hecuba fear that man so much? Would it not be well that the unfortunate woman should be removed from his reach? Was it not possible that John Glengyle might have some reason for hunting the maniac?

Scipio had no idea of telling what he ought not to tell. He had conceived a most devoted love for the generous girl,—he knew that she was Roderic's affianced bride,—and he felt that there could be no harm in telling her a part of Hecuba's story. So he commenced. He did not think how much he would tell—he did not think how much he ought to tell; he only thought that he was pleasing the gentle girl who sat by his side, and gazed so eagerly up into his face.

"Ah," he said, shaking his head, "John Glengyle am a bad man; an' Mas'r Roderic knows it. He's 'fear'd ob poor Hecuba, an' I t'ink he'd hurt her if he could."

Now Maggie had to ask a question. She could not help it.

And Scipio had to answer it.

This led to another question.

Another answer.

And now Maggie was all wonder and interest. What did it mean? She had gained a faint glimmer of the truth, and she must have the whole.

Poor Scipio, honest and faithful still, ready to lay down his life for those he loved, looked into Maggie's upturned face, and told her the whole story. He did not tell it all at a breath,—he did not give it in a continuous narrative; but, from point to point—from fact to fact—he went on, until the whole thing was revealed.

Hecuba was really **Helen Glengyle**! She was Roderic's mother! And, in the time long ago, the dark, bad man at Waldvale Hall had done some base and wicked thing against her.

Aye—and how clear it all looked. How much similarity there was between the mother and son. How much there was in Hecuba's face like that in the face of Roderic. How many points of likeness there were: the brow; the eyes; the nose; the chin; and the same flitting smile when the affections were pleasantly moved.

"Bress de Lord, I hope I habn't done wrong," said Scipio, when he realized what he had revealed.

"No, no," cried Maggie. "You have done just right. I am glad that I know all this, for now I can help you understandingly. I think you had better return to Newtown with me. We can send somebody up to-morrow to look after the place. Hecuba and I can ride, and you can go with us on foot."

"It's gettin' to be dark," returned Scipio; "an' p'raps Hecuba wouldn't go. She's sort o' queer 'bout such t'ings."

So it was growing dark; and Maggie had not noticed it. Where had the hours flown to?

"I must go," she said; "for my mother will worry. Can you not call Hecuba up, and ask her to accompany me? She may consent."

Just as Scipio arose to obey this request, his step was arrested by the sound of horses' feet upon the little bridge above the house.

"Somebody's coming," he whispered.

"Coming from the North," added Maggie, bending her ear to listen.

"Yes," returned Scipio—"comin' from Waldvale, p'raps."

The maiden listened until she knew that the horses were approaching the cot, and then she went to the window and looked out. By the last glimmer of daylight she could see five horsemen riding up into the yard, one of whom she quickly recognized as John Glengyle. At that moment she had no fears for herself. She had lived so near to the man for so many years, and had known him so well, that thought of personal harm did not enter her mind. She only feared for the poor maniac.

"I hope he don't mean no mischief," said Scipio, when Maggie had told him who was coming.

But before the maiden could reply Sir John had entered the cot, and his four men with him. Two of these followers were servants of his, and the other two were strangers to our heroine, though she fancied, from their garbs, that they were river boatmen. The baronet started back a step when he saw Maggie Burns.

"Ha,—is this you, Miss Maggie?"

The demand did not need an answer, and she made none.

"I thought you were in Newtown. How came you here?"

"I came up to see the place, sir, and also to see if these people needed any assistance."

"Upon my soul, Maggie, you are a brave girl, and it is curious that our errands should be alike. I came for that very purpose. I have felt that these people ought not to be left here alone, especially in such times as these; so I have concluded to take them to Waldvale."

"No, no, Mas'r; don't do dat," said Scipio. "We'd a good deal rudder stay here."

"But I don't want you to stay here," returned Sir John, abruptly. "You and Hecuba are going to Waldvale with me to-night. Where is the woman?"

"She's asleep, mas'r."

"Then we'll have her up at once. There is an old doctor at the hall who wishes to see her. He thinks he can cure her. Wake her up."

But there was no need of this, for the disturbance had aroused the maniac, and she came out from her bed-room. The baronet, when he saw her, turned immediately to where his four men stood, and spoke with them in a whisper.

"Those two females I want," he said, "and I want them without any trouble or dispute. There's no use in arguing with a crazy woman, and as for the other, she's the one that shot Griswold's men. Take the women, and I'll look out for the negro."

The two servants approached Hecuba, and told her she must go with them. Maggie, still thinking more of the unfortunate maniac than of herself, turned towards them, and as she made the motion, she was seized from behind by the two boatmen. John Glengyle advanced to Scipio with a cocked pistol in his hand, and threatened to blow his brains out if he moved a step.

The whole work was done in a very few moments. Hecuba struggled, and so did Maggie struggle, but it was of no use. Hecuba was conquered with difficulty, while Maggie gave up very quickly. The maiden found that she was overmatched, and taken at a disadvantage, and she had a reason for not continuing the struggle. If she submitted before she lost her pistols, the weapons might not be discovered, and she would thus have friends in case of need. And further than this: She saw that to frustrate the design of the baronet would then be impossible, and might it not be well that she should accompany Hecuba? Still she demanded of Sir John to know why she was thus treated. She stood before him, after her hands had been cruelly lashed behind her, with the bold light flashing in her eyes, and the proud curve upon her lip, and asked him why he had done this thing.

The host of Waldvale hesitated. He dared not provoke her further in the presence of his menials, so he lied to her.

"I mean you no harm," he said. "Go with me quietly to Waldvale, and all shall be well with you."

"But why these bonds, sir?"

"Ah, my fair one, we have had an exhibition of your temper which leads us to be a little careful how you are left to your own will of action."

"I shall go with you, sir, but woe betide you if you do me harm."

"You have no reason to fear that, Miss Maggie."

Poor Scipio had suffered most during this scene, and his deep groans of agony were painful to hear. But he was forced to submit.

Hecuba behaved strangely. As soon as her hands were bound she ceased her raving, and settled at once into a state of apparent indifference. She seemed melancholy and sad, as though her last friend was gone, and her own doom sealed.

Maggie's horse was brought out from the stall, and after Scipio had been placed upon its back, Sir John took the rein in his own hand. Then Hecuba was taken up before one of the servants, and Maggie up by another, and thus the party started off. When they reached the Hall, Hecuba and Scipio were first disposed of, they being both sent to a chamber far up under the roof, where a stout lock could be sealed against them, and where they could be together as usual. What further disposition should be made of them might be determined on the morrow.

As Maggie was led through the hall, she saw a man cross the way just ahead of her, coming in by one door and going out at another. He had a candle in his hand, and seemed to be in a hurry. The maiden stopped an instant, as though touched by an electric current, but she made no further sign, and quickly moved on again. Sir John went with her to a snug chamber, where he informed her that she might rest in peace if she pleased. The bond had been removed from her arms, and she saw that the apartment was a comfortable one.

"Not yet," she said, as the host started to retire. "I have a word to speak with you. I saw a man in the hall as we came through. It was Louis Griswold!"

"Very likely," replied the baronet. "Captain Griswold is in the house, as I have learned since our arrival."

"And will he be suffered to trouble me?"

"I can't say as to that, Miss Maggie."

"John Glengyle," said our heroine, starting back a step, and gazing upon the host with a proud look, "I demand of you an answer to my question. This house is yours, and I am your guest, unwilling though it be. I suffered myself to be easily entrapped, because I believed that you would not prove a traitor to the commonest instincts of humanity. Am I to be subjected to Louis Griswold's insulting presence?"

John Glengyle threw off the mask.

"Maggie Burns," he said, with a fiendish glare in his eye, "when I went to the cot tonight I did not think of finding you there, but when I did find you, I determined to take you with me. Your sex cannot soften your gross treason, nor can that sex shield you from the punishment due to the crime you have committed. Personally I care nothing for you, one way or the other, but as the evil spirit of my infatuated nephew, I hate you. And so, as you have stood in rank and deadly rebellion against Captain Griswold, to his keeping I shall deliver you. Now you have the whole truth. Have you any more questions to ask?"

"No sir—not of John Glengyle!"

The baronet went out, and locked the door after him, leaving a candle burning upon the table. Maggie listened until the sound of his footfall had died away in the distance, and then she examined the doors and windows of her apartment. From this examination one thing was evident: Escape from that place would be difficult.

What should she do? She sat down and reflected, and while she reflected she examined her pistols, to see that they were to be depended upon. She was not entirely helpless, though her situation was by no means a pleasant or desirable one.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

LET THEM SCOLD!

This is a hard world, isn't it, where people have to bear each other's burdens; and wives get scolded roundly whenever their husbands have the toothache, or get short of money. Somehow, women are always getting their fingers pinched and their toes trod on, in the mischievous machinery of life—they have been in a state of hopeless disgrace ever since Eve gathered the unlucky apple. Don't see, either, why the whole responsibility should come on *our* heads! Why should we be lectured every time an editor's chimney smokes, or his baby cries! Hit one of your own size, Mr. Quill, and don't waste your powder on the peccadilloes of miserable little womankind! Now just look at the folly of the thing. Take an impartial peep at the poor wretch, ink-besplashed, and wafer-sprinkled, from the crown of his head to the sole of his feet, who dreams about abysmal inkstands, and missing "copy" at night, and never goes anywhere without a pair of scissors in his hat—*he* constitutes himself the sublime critic and censor of the meek females who are confiding enough to believe everything they see in print. He has a sort of chronic idea that women need talking to; at all events, his wife frets, and wears badly-fitting gloves, and don't understand the art of making good coffee, and of course, all the rest of the world's wife goes and does likewise! He don't dare—mercy upon us! What are we saying? of course an editor *dare* do anything—but we mean, he had a little rather not stir up Mrs. Quill's wrath, as long as she is moderately quiet and peaceable. So he sneaks off down town, in a rusty coat and rumpled cravat, his hair half-brushed, and his ten fingers sticking through ten holes in his gloves, dives into his dusty office like a hyena into its den, and lets off his surplus ill-temper in a long article on the follies and weaknesses of the female sex—a stinging exposure of the fact that their collars are not always clean, nor their curls smooth, and that if the investigation were carried *a l'outrance*, an infinitesimal fraction *might* possibly be found in the toe of madame's stocking! Shades of all the henhussies that ever lived and died! we can endure a great deal, but this is a little too small game for any created being!

Don't we wish we were an editor for about a week? Wouldn't we pay up old scores? Wouldn't we descend into the valley of the inkstand, with a stack of pens upon our shoulder? Wouldn't we live on vinegar and the essential oil of aloes until we were acid enough to "pitch in" regular newspaper fashion? There would be a sensation among the exchanges, we guess, when our paper came to hand, in the weekly mails. How we would show the animals up, and overwhelm them with "Hints," and "Words of Advice," and "Appropriate Suggestions." Let's see—this is the way we would manage it:

"Gentlemen should always endeavor to be delicately neat in their habits. Of all things, a knocked-in hat, or a ragged cravat, is the most unendurable. *We* never could marry a man with shiny elbows to his coat!"

"We are sorry to see the gentlemen of the present day so pale and enervated. Let them follow the examples of their heroic grandmothers, and go bravely to work. Brooms and dust-pans are an excellent remedy for headaches and biliousness!"

"Gentlemen should try to break themselves of whistling as they go along the streets to their business; it is very disagreeable to nervous ladies. We wonder their natural sense and delicacy has not long ago taught them this lesson!"

"We wish our marrying young ladies would remember, in choosing husbands, that whiskers and complexion are only skin deep, and that quiet, unobtrusive youths who don't smoke and are not ashamed to be caught in the kitchen, are the right kind of metal for domestic use!"

"It is most important to instil into the rising male generation of this day the habit of industry. Instead of spending their leisure moments in twiddling their thumbs, and pulling their moustaches, let them hasten to the work-basket, and busy themselves in sewing buttons on to their wristbands and mending their gloves. A gentleman never appears to better advantage than when employed in useful labor!"

That's the way we would harangue them!

What splendid paragraphs we could tuck in to the odd corners of our paper. There is absolutely no end of subjects! Possibly our audience would be astonished—*probably* they would be indignant. That's just the sensation we experience a hundred times. Now let us see how it will work on the other side of the house! Let them scold—we have heard that kind of noise pretty frequently, and shall not haul down our colors at the first volley of cannon! What a buzzing there would be in the enemy's ranks! Won't some editor be good enough to lend us his chair for a week?

Mrs. George Washington Wyllys.

TO A FRIEND, ON HER BIRTH-DAY.

BY PHŒBE CARY.

Thy untried feet have safely reached
  The bound of childhood's pleasant shore;
And all its hopes, and all its joys,
  Are thine to cherish nevermore.
Where thou hast still securely kept
  No longer may'st thou lightly stray;
The great trust of thy womanhood
  Is laid upon thy soul to-day.

O, solemn hour, O, joyful hour,
  What power for innocence or guilt,
Thou hold'st within thy mortal hand,
  To shape the future as thou wilt!
Thy beauthy and thy youth must fade,
  Yet better things than these are thine;
Faith, and unsullied purity,
  Are given thee never to resign.

Keep them so well, that thou may'st say,
  Entering at last the gates of heaven,
Lo! Father, I, thy child, am here,
  With all the treasures thou hast given.
So that thy soul shall shine at last
  As stars that rise, and go not down,
A jewel fitted to adorn
  The Saviour's everlasting crown.

THE RUSTIC FINANCIERS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF THE GREEN MOUNTAIN BOYS.

Among all the curious and cunning devices ever concocted to make money without legitimate means, not one, perhaps, can be found which surpasses, in originality and shrewdness, a scheme got up for that purpose, and successfully carried out, some twenty years ago, in one of the interior towns of Vermont, called Cozy Corners, by three men, known by the several names of Riah Cutefight, Bill Versute, and Eph Equivoke, the surnames being nicknames bestowed by the odd and crafty old pettifogger of the place, who, in turn, was dubbed by them *Runa Rasp'em*.

The tavern bar-room—that standing Elysium of small, country village loungers—had long been the head-quarters of the above-named trio. At one of their meetings at this place on a stormy evening, when the inclemency of the weather kept all other company from the house, Riah Cutefight, the leading spirit of the three, who had been for some time in a deep study, suddenly aroused himself, and, bringing down his palm with a smart slap on his knee, exultingly exclaimed:

"I have it. Yes, sirs, *I have it!* It is done!"

"What is it you have? and what is it that's done?" asked his companions, looking at him in surprise.

"The new plan I've been studying out for accomplishing what we three have so often talked about," replied the former, glancing round doubtfully at the sleeping landlord.

"Talk it out," said Bill Versute. "No risk from that source."

"I don't know about that," rejoined Cutefight, shaking his head. "It will be more prudent to hold in, till we get out of all ear-shot, on our way home."

"But it will do no hurt to kind'er suppose a case, so as to give us a sort of general idea of your scheme; no matter if it is a little blind. I can guess it out," remarked Equivoke, who, as his name implies, was himself a dealer in ambiguities.

"Then, to strike at once at the root of the matter, I make the supposition that, *every man has in him a chunk of human nature as big as a woodchuck.* Don't laugh, I'm serious. That simple fact forms the base of my whole scheme."

"Ah? And there are always certain points of that chunk that we can seize on, and turn to our advantage? That is quite an idea—I begin to see. We'll *have* a plan out of it, if you have not already."

"But I have—a regular plan, and pretty much decided how to carry it out in the details, and old Rasp'em will tell us how to keep clear of legal snags. Let us be off now, and stop at Versute's house, when you shall have my whole plan, which we will discuss, and then agree on a time to begin operations," added Cutefight, as the three donned their fox-skin caps and left the tavern.

On the third morning after this, Cutefight and Versute were seen, with considerable appearance of stealth, making their way in the one horse team of the former out of the village, up the road northward, on some unknown destination. As these men had ever before been quite open-mouthed about all their movements, and had now gone off without saying a word about it, though evidently equipped for a considerable journey, their departure at once attracted general attention. And many were the queries and conjectures raised among the curious and wondering villagers respecting the cause and character of the unusual movement; but nobody could throw any light upon the subject. In this dilemma Eph Equivoke, who, having been selected by his confederates to play a necessary part in the game afoot, now made his appearance in the street, was appealed to on all sides to aid in exslaining the singular affair. But he, though supposed to know everybody's business, and especially that of the two men in question, appeared as much in the dark as any of them; thought it looked rather suspicious, and finally recalled certain curious circumstances, which he could not name, but which were enough to enable him "to form his *own* opinions on the matter."

These dark hints and surmises, coming as they did from one who would be most likely to hit on the truth, instead of explaining, only increased the mystery, which thereupon, for the next three days, became the chief staple of conversation among the good people of Cozy Corners.

At the close of the third day, however, the affair was destined to assume a new aspect, but one which was little calculated to allay the excitement it had already occasioned. Just at dark, on that day, the two absentees were seen to be approaching along the road, in which they had departed, at a slow pace, and walking by the side of their team, as if the load was too heavy to permit of their riding. On reaching the Corners, they drove up to the tavern door and called out the landlord.

"Landlord, can you store for us, a few days, that half barrel of flour?" said Cutefight, with an air of mysterious privacy as he pointed to a half barrel in their wagon, visibly marked with a well-known flour brand.

"O, yes, certainly, Mr. Cutefight."

"But haven't you some empty room, which can be locked up, to put it in, so that it can be perfectly safe?"

"Why, yes—if you say so; but what need——"

"Well, we have our own reasons; but all right, as you say you can put it under lock and key. So, Versute, let us see if we can get it into the house."

The two men took strong hold on the ends of the cask, lifted it out with much seeming effort, and, staggering along with it to the door, followed the landlord to a back-room, where they deposited the precious burden, locked the door, took the key, and hurrying out, drove off home with the air of men anxious to avoid all chance of being questioned.

"Now make me believe, if you can, that there is nothing but flour in that cask they just tugged in there," significantly remarked Equivoke to those who, like himself, had gradually edged up near enough to see and hear all that had transpired.

"So say I—and I," promptly responded others. "It is evidently too heavy to be only flour; and then they have been so sly and secret! But what can it be they've got in the cask?"

"Maybe they've robbed some bank, and got the spesha," suggested one.

"Maybe they've found a mine of solid gold," remarked another.

"And maybe, too, they've got a lot of counterfeit hard money," added Equivoke, in tone and look of peculiar meaning.

This last intimation, which evidently at once struck all as affording the best explanation of the suspicious affair, caused a lively sensation among the crowd—some shaking their heads and saying nothing, some suggesting an immediate movement for the arrest of the suspected men, but the greater number advocating delay till the counterfeit money had been passed. And so they all, now soon dispersing, thoughtfully took their way to their respective homes.

The next morning, Cutefight and Versute came to the tavern, and after being alone awhile in the room where the mysterious cask was deposited, came out into the street, and listlessly sauntered along into the store; when, taking the storekeeper aside, and pulling out a dozen half-dollars, they quietly asked him if he would like to buy them.

"No—can't go into that game," forbiddingly muttered the storekeeper, full of the prevailing suspicion.

"But you can examine them, can't you?" said Cutefight, with composure.

"Well—yes," replied the other, hesitatingly, taking the proffered coins, and carefully subjecting them to the usual tests of ringing them on the counter, paring their edges, &c.

"Why," he at length resumed, in surprise, "*these*, at least, are all good. "You meant, I suppose, to ask me to exchange them for other money?"

"O, no—it was a sale we proposed. We don't expect to get the par value for those, nor the rest of our stock of the same kind now on hand, or to be on hand according to the encouragement we meet with in sales. But seeing they pass muster so well with you, suppose you give us—say about seventy-five cents on the dollar for this little lot. Will you do it?"

"Why—well—y-e-s—yes; I don't know why I should not, if you *really* wish it. Let's see—twelve halves, six wholes, and six quarters off, leaves $4 50; and here it is. But now recollect, it was *your own* offer; so don't hereafter say I cheated you."

"Be sure not. And, on our part, we wish you hereafter to recollect that we did not *pass*, or *offer* to pass, those pieces to you for good money, but only *sold* them."

With this, the two hard money venders went off, leaving the storekeeper completely at a loss what to make of the affair, and not a little doubtful about the propriety of his own course. And, like other men in similar predicaments, he was anxious for the opinions of others; so he called in some particular friends, related all that had occurred, and with them examined anew the money, which they all, at length, agreed were nothing else than genuine silver half dollars. And these men going out, soon spread the news, which brought in others, and yet others, to go through the same process; till, before night, every man, woman and child of the village had the exciting subject in full discussion. But not one of them all could give any satisfactory solution of the mystery where the money came from, or how it was obtained.

On the following day, Equivoke, who had the day before purposely absented himself from the village, that everything might be thoroughly discussed without his help, and nothing appear to be hurried, carelessly entered the store to learn the news, he said; when he was shown the money in question, and informed of all that had taken place. He appeared to be both surprised and gratified to find the money, so contrary to what he should have expected, to be unquestionably genuine; was convinced he had wrongly suspected these men, who, after all, probably had never had any notion of entering on any unlawful enterprise. They might have, somehow, got honest access to some great treasure; and, if so, it would be a matter of interest to the whole village. He was resolved to know more of the business. If a shower of money was about to fall on the place, he wanted to know it, so he could hold up his cap for a share. He would soon visit Riah and Bill, and find out something about it, and see on what terms they would let others in as sharers.

The words of Equivoke, who by his course had warded off all supicion of any complicity of his own in the affair, now evidently made a deep impression on his listeners; and they all urged him to make his proposed visit without delay. And being thus solicited, he at length promised that, though he would have liked a little more time to think of it, he yet would go the coming evening, and meet them all at the store, the next morning, to report his discoveries.

Punctual to his appointment, Equivoke made his appearance the next morning at the store, where the company of yesterday, and most of all the other men of the village with them, had already assembled to hear the promised report.

"Got to give it us," said he, in response to the inquiring glances of the company; "was on good terms with Riah and Bill, certainly, before they took to being by themselves so much, and felt sure I could get all I wanted out of 'em. But, as to their main secret, they keep their mouths as close as clams."

"But did you get no clue to it? nothing out of all their talk to enable you to form a pretty close guess about the truth of the case?" asked the store-keeper, as spokesman for the rest.

"No, not as to where the money came from, or how they first got track of it."

"Then you believe there *really is* money they can get when they please?"

"Yes, enough to make every man at Cozy Corners rich as mud."

"Then why don't they go and get it, or let somebody else do it?"

"Just what *I* told them, which brought them out a little, and they at length admitted that it required considerable capital to operate to advantage, though for every dollar they pay out, they are sure to get more than twenty in return. And the reason they don't go fully into it immediately, is the lack of such capital which they hope to get soon, when they will begin operations on a large scale."

"But how about letting in others for a chance?"

"Well, they hung off a good deal at first, being naturally anxious to get it all for themselves, but at last came round as fair as I could expect. And I finally succeeded in getting their promise to let in a select number, provided they would raise them, within a month, an amount large enough to make it worth while to go into it. I shall subscribe for a full share, or $100, which I think I can raise securities for borrowing I shall advise no man to it, lest, if the thing don't turn out well he might blame me. But I shall give every man a chance to join who wants to, in a private way; for the whole move had better be kept as secret as possible."

So saying, Equivoke, with the elated and restless air of one having important business to attend to, bade his eager listeners good morning, and hurried away into the street. After he left, the company sat some time, musing in silence, as if debating in mind a question, on which they cared not to express themselves openly; when one after another, they all quietly rose and left the store, and before that day's sun had set every one of them, watching his opportunity in the street, had taken Equivoke aside and requested him to put them down for the amount required to make them full sharers in the enterprise.

From this time, all public discussion on the subject, which, for the past few days, had caused so much agitation, seemed strangely to subside. But though such was the *outward* aspect, yet everything tended to show that the scheme was being as rapidly as it was silently pushed forward to the grand consummation. Equivoke, for the next two or three weeks, seemed to be everywhere, and everywhere equally busy; though none but the initiated could divine the character of his business; for he not only kept a close mouth himself, but enjoined secrecy on all others to whom he disclosed his projects. So well, indeed, was all this managed by him, that none of all whom he had enlisted, exactly knew who, or how many had joined the company. And with equal adroitness had he conducted his dealings with every individual, especially in steering clear of all representations, which could be construed into *false pretences to get money*, relying wholly, after stating all the facts yet come to light, on such hints, and apparently indifferent remarks, as he judged best calculated to excite curiosity and awaken the avarice of the individual addressed. In this manner he conducted his bold enterprise, and so diligently and successfully did he pursue his object, at the same time, that, by the end of the third week, he had securely enlisted a company of thirty men in the village and vicinity, of all grades of wealth and character, including, as it afterwards leaked out, half the members of the church, and even their good Deacon among the number.

"Riah Cutefight is a philosopher," soliloquized Equivoke, as he retired from a successful application made to the last man he proposed to add to the company—"yes, he was entirely right—there *is indeed a chunk of human nature in every man as big as a wood-chuck*, else our cake had been forever dough."

The most difficult and delicate part of his task being now accomplished, nothing more for the present remained for Equivoke to do, but to watch the machinery he had put in motion. And the many silent but significant movements, which, to his gratification, he ascertained were now generally beginning to be made among his recruits, such as mortgaging small farms, journeys to distant money lenders, and applications for loans at the nearest bank, all to raise money for unknown purposes, and in specific sums of $100 each, soon sufficiently assured him, that everything was going right, and that, by the end of the month when he was to go round to receive it, the golden havest would be ready for the reaping.

The eventful period was at length fulfilled, and the long-looked-for day, which was to be the last limit of payment, had come and passed away. On the evening of that day, as soon as night had securely drawn her curtains, and while Cutefight and Versute were sitting, in the most retired room of the house of the latter, in evident expectancy of some arrival, the important Equivoke, fresh from his hard, but now successfully closed labors of collection, suddenly, and with his usual stealthy step, glided into the apartment.

"There!" he exclaimed, with a low exulting chuckle, as glancing knowingly at the others, he unrolled from an old newspaper a large number of assorted and labelled packages of bank bills, and spread them out on the table—there, sirs! all finished up at last. Just thirty of them in all, a hundred in each; so exactly a clean, cool thousand apiece! Now aint it great?—all just so—but run them over for yourselves."

The three now eagerly joined in the count of the packages, found all right, divided them equally, and pocketed their respective shares, while dancing about the room, gleefully snapping their fingers, and otherwise extravagantly evincing the intense gratification they felt at the almost unhoped for success of this, their grand financial enterprise.

"Well, Eph," said Cutefight, as their demonstrations subsided, "what do you say now to my philosophy about that *chunk of human nature?* You have proved it true by this time, hav'n't you?"

"Yes, it is that, old Rasp'em and the Devil aiding, which has enabled me to go through with *my* difficult part of the scheme so cleverly. But what is now to be the next move for you and Bill?"

"To be off as we told you, this very night, for some snug prairie farm in the far West. We could probably stay here without being hurt, as things have been managed; but it might not be exactly pleasant to live among those whom we have taxed so heavily for the lessons of wisdom we shall have given them—not that I should count myself more guilty than they; for the readiness with which they enlisted in our scheme, shows their willingness to go secretly into practices more unlawful than any *we* ever dreamed of. Yes, we are going, I have no wife; Bill has lost his. We two can well go, and, with a hint from you that we have gone after the treasure, get off safely."

"But have you arranged everything? There is a mortgage or something aint there, where you raised the money we agreed on for starting operations? I never exactly knew how you managed matters when you were gone—tell me, if you please."

"I will—well, after leaving here, we steered directly for a man living about a dozen miles off, whom I knew, and who loaned us $300 on a mortgage of Versute's house here, and a lien on my team. He let us have bills all of one bank over the mountain; and with them over we went, drew out the silver in half dollars, bought a half barrel of flour, opened it, beat down a hole, put in our little bag of money, headed it up tight again, and came home. You know the rest of that. Well, a few days ago we took over the same money, mostly still on hand, you know, to pay up the mortgage man, but was at last lucky enough to sell him the house outright, for nearly the same sum, which left my team clear, and the money to be taken by Versute, who has also privately disposed of his furniture. So every thing is fixed. The old horse is eating his last mess of Vermont oats, and we shall be far on our journey before morning."

"All right for you; but I shall brave it out, for the present, and that being so, all the better for me may be your going, as folks may look on you two as the only responsible ones."

"Yes, and to favor that idea the more, for your sake, Bill and I, before we go, will put something on paper and leave it—say under those old newspapers there in the corner, where you can contrive to have it found when the storm bursts, which you must try to stave off as long as you can."

"I will; but the first thing for me to do is to go back to the Corners before folks are abed, to drop the hints necessary to have the right version put on your absence to-morrow morning."

"Thank you Eph. You've done well throughout, and, though not helping any about raising the starting funds, have richly earned the full share you've got—perhaps more; so we will give you that half barrel of flour, still locked up at the tavern; and here is the key."

And so the confederates parted; when Equivoke, calling on several of his company, told him he had placed all the money raised in the hands of Cutefight and Versute, who were preparing to start with it before light the next morning, and hinted at the great things now, in four or five days, to be expected; while the two latter immediately tackled up and departed, but in a manner widely different from what their credulous dupes were anticipating.

Equivoke was now calculating on a quiet of at least four days; but he was a little mistaken. On the third evening there was much anxious waiting for the arrival of the expected men, and the next morning, when it was fully ascertained they had not arrived, a great deal of disappointment was expressed, and many significant questions began to be raised. And, while many began to be thus agitated by lurking suspicions, an event now occured that soon fanned those suspicions into an open flame. It was accidentally discovered that Versute had sold out his house and furniture. The news flew like the wind. Excited men came flocking to the tavern from all quarters, and clamored loudly for Equivoke, who, now appearing, seemed as much alarmed as the rest, and proposed an instant search of Versute's house, which was accordingly, as soon as it could be reached, ransacked, but in vain, from top to bottom for the money, or something to throw light on the subject. While this was going on, Equivoke found opportunity to secure the promised written missive, and, unseen, place it, with the key he had taken, on a window sill, where they were soon espied, and snatched up with the exclamations—

"A letter! a sealed letter, addressed, '*To whom it concerns.*' What can it mean? Will it do to open it? And then here is a key too!"

"A key?" said Equivoke, coming forward at the mention of the article. "Now I'll bet that is the key of the tavern room, where they kept the half barrel of flour and their money in it; and that reminds I bought that flour of them some time ago, and was to have it when they took the money away. But who knows whether the money aint there yet? If 'tis, we'll just have it, and divide it up among ourselves. Let's all hands go and see, and take the letter along with us."

Another rush was now made for the tavern, the mysterious room entered, the half barrel opened, the flour found safe, but the money gone. With low mutterings of disappointment, the searchers came out to the door, around which nearly the whole of the secret band, though mostly unknown to each other as such, were by this time assembled; when the letter was called for, torn open and read as follows:

> "To all good Deacons, church folks and others, who can honestly say they are without the sin of abetting what they must have known to be, if anything at all was to be made out of it, nothing more or less than a scheme for passing counterfeit money—*let them cast the first stone.*
>
> (Signed) Riah Cutefight.
> William Versute.

This cool and significant missive was enough for them. Their worst suspicions were all confirmed, and their eyes were now fully opened to the unwelcome and mortifying truth. But it would have taken a painter adequately to depict the varying expressions of wrath and chagrin that marked their chop-fallen countenances. None now, however, ventured to proclaim themselves particularly injured or interested in the denouement; and all soon sneakingly slipped away to their homes. But as each one of course knew the part Equivoke had taken, individual communion could be had with him without exposure; and he was therefore fiercely beset by them all in turn—some begging him to help them, or at least aid in ferreting out the runaways, some accusing him of being an accomplice, and some threatening him outright with suit or criminal prosecution. But Equivoke was very innocent—didn't know as he could blame them for thinking or saying as they did, but he was in fact more to be pitied than any of them; and now it would be as cruel as it would be useless to go to bothering him with suits and prosecutions. And because they believed, as he said, that suits or prosecutions, with any evidence they could command, would be useless, but more especially because they were unwilling to have it known to the public that they had enlisted in a scheme of so questionable a character on the face of it, they *did* forbear to carry their threats into execution, all except one man, who honestly owned up that he was one of the secret company, swore he would have his money back, and at length brought a suit to recover it. But Equivoke was Equivoke still. Though he had no great fears that the suit would go against him on a trial, yet he would prefer, like the others, to avoid one if, as he believed, he could dodge out of the scrape without it. And with this idea in his scheming brain, he repaired to the court, set in the dining-room of a tavern in another part of the town, promptly answered to his name when the suit was called, but begged a short delay of proceedings with a view to a settlement. He then beckoned his opponent in the suit to a distant corner, and meekly whispered him—

"Now you don't want to make a poor man like me pay any cost?"

"Not a cent, if I can only get my money back."

"Well, if I could only pay it in some way so 'twouldn't be known what it was for——"

"I don't care in what way it is paid, so I get it."

"Then suppose you meet me in the bar-room half an hour hence, and I will see what I will do."

The parties accordingly met in the designated room, when Equivoke, seeing several respectable men sitting there who appeared to be observant of all that was passing, pulled out his wallet, counted out before them one hundred dollars, with the bills in hand, approached his opponent, and said to him aloud—

"Then you say you want to borrow a hundred dollars of me to-day?"

"Why—ye-s," replied the other, hesitating, but, under the supposition that these words were only used to disguise the matter, finally adding an emphatic "*Yes.*"

"Well, here it is then," said Equivoke, openly handing over the money—"don't want any note—only you stop the suit and give me a receipt of settlement," he added in a whisper.

The man did so, and supposed that was the end of the affair. But he was soon made to see his error. Within a fortnight Equivoke sued him for money loaned. The man swore terribly, but soon finding the evidence of the loan, and of his own admission of it as such, so full that he could not help himself, he reluctantly paid back the money, and thus found himself just as much worse off than he was when he began as the costs of both suits amounted to.

This was the last act of this unique little drama. Equivoke was molested no more. But in a few months he appeared to grow very discontented, and to have become fully convinced that a poor man could do much better in the western country. Accordingly he soon packed up, and with his family openly went off in that direction. And this was the last ever known at *Cozy Corners* of any of The Rustic Financiers.

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER
BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

The views of honest poverty are always hopeful and prospective. Strength of muscle and strength of mind form a truly Holy Alliance: and the future brightens before the steadfast eye of trust.

Life in every shape should be precious to us, for the same reason that the Turks carefully collect every scrap of paper that comes in their way, because the name of God may be written on it.

Envy not the eagle his wings. In one year's time the novelty of wings would be over with you, and you would skim undelighted the edges of the clouds.

The superfluous blossoms on a fruit tree are meant to symbolize the large way in which God loves to do pleasant things.

One of the uses of friends is that they can say of us with propriety what we cannot with delicacy say of ourselves.

A day of innocent amusement may be a Sabbath to the soul. There is not necessarily much difference between a holiday and a holy-day.

A surgical journal tells of a man who lived five years with a ball in his head. We have known ladies live twice as long with nothing but balls in their heads.

A man is not like steeped tea-leaves; the more strength and virtue you draw out of him, the more is left within him.

Misery no doubt loves company, but, when a young lady has her lover's company, 'tis no sure sign that she is miserable.

A good many presiding officers at public meetings don't know how to put a question. Young ladies think it should be popped.

There is often but a slight separation between a woman's love and her hate. Her keen teeth are very near to her sweet lips.

The most beautiful results are produced by the conjunction of opposites; it is the sunshine and the cloud that make the rainbow.

It is not known at what season of the year our first parents were placed in Eden; but they went out in "the Fall."

Next to the Newgate Calendar, the biography of authors is the most sickening chapter in the history of man.

"Look here, printer, you have not punctuated my poem at all." "Well, sir, I am not a pointer—I'm a setter."

Friendship which flows from the heart cannot be frozen by adversity, as the water that flows from a spring does not congeal in winter.

What we take to be our recognition of another's merit is often only a recognition of what appears to be his recognition of ours.

A vine bears three grapes, the first of pleasure, the second of intoxication, the third of repentance

The men play cricket in the fields. A woman plays cricket by singing cheerily at the hearth-stone.

Locking or bolting a scolding woman in a room is generally the only way to shut her up.

Many a fellow is like a pig; you need never look to him for a straight tale.

The notes of a barrel organ should be the *finest* of all music, for they are *ground.*

The most thriftless of all agricultural pursuits is the sowing of wild oats.

A man's nerves and muscles will have no fine springs if he never drinks at one.

It is absurd to suppose that a man can speak above his breath, since his mouth is below his nose.

It is almost as difficult generally to recover a lost reputation as a lost umbrella.

The doctor is often an overtaker that makes work for the undertaker.

Look well to your diet; aliment is easily changed to ailment.

That soul is impure which is never washed with tears.

Kings find no surer way of preserving their crowns than by inciting their subjects to get their's broken.

No Cabinet-maker can make an easy chair for a discontented man.

CURRENT ITEMS.

A new Map of the United States, admirably adapted to the times, has just been published in this city, at a very moderate price, by G. Q. Colton, 145 Nassau street. As many people who have scarcely looked at a map since their schoolboy days, are now desirous of refreshing their memories, we advise them to procure this map, as it contains many important improvements.

A lawyer of some note in this city, while sitting in his office, in Wall street, was called upon by a couple of well-dressed and respectable looking women, for a subscription to some charitable institution, which he gallantly gave them; on retiring, they rubbed against him, as if accidentally, but when he missed his pocket-book a short time afterwards, he came to the conclusion that they did it on purpose.

A man living in Lafayette avenue, Brooklyn, in firing a revolver from his back door, one evening lately, put a ball through the back parlor window of a neighbor living in the rear of his dwelling, which luckily did no damage except to window glass and wall paper, but which *might* have carried death and mourning to the unsuspecting family.

Morris Emmett, a stevedore, getting into a quarrel one day lately with a fellow-laborer on the wharf, struck him a violent blow which knocked him into the East river, whereupon Morris, in great affright, jumped in after him, and was nearly drowned in his efforts to rescue the victim of his violence; but both men were saved by a couple of sailors who chanced to be at hand.

A poor washerwoman, living in Avenue B, while hanging out clothes in the yard, heard her child, a little girl four years of age, scream in the house, and rushing in, she found that the poor little thing had fallen into a tub of hot water; and although the mother at once rescued the child, she was scalded so badly that she died in a few hours in great agony.

A number of boys, from four to eight years of age, who were visiting a playfelfow recently, experimented in the third story as to who could lean out of the window the farthest without raising the feet from the floor; and one little fellow, five years old, losing his balance, fell headlong to the pavement, and was instantly killed.

A Delaware paper says, that at a pic-nic recently held in the lower part of that State, the company were suddenly assailed by what was supposed to be a catamount, which scratched some of the men, who attempted to drive it off, rather severely, and frightened the women and children out of all idea of pic-nicking for evermore.

A child strayed from its mother's side and fell overboard from a Brooklyn ferryboat one day recently, and as it fell from the bow, the boat passed over it, and its body was not seen after it struck the water. The mother was so frantic with affright and agony, that she had to be taken home in a carriage.

A party of five rowdy boys purloined a boat at Gowanus, not long since, and attempted to sail over to Staten Island; but not knowing very well how to manage the boat, and the wind coming up stiff, they were capsized, and two of them were drowned before assistance could be rendered them.

An aged man, leading a little girl, in attempting to cross Broadway, opposite the Astor House, one afternoon recently, became entangled in the crowd of vehicles, and while trying to protect the child, was himself knocked down, and injured so severely that he had to be taken to the hospital.

John Randy, a sailor just in from a long cruise, being determined to "have a good time," went into a miserable den in Water street, where he was made drunk, robbed of all his hard-earned money and a gold watch, and then beaten savagely and turned into the street.

A man was run over, a short time since, on the Winchester, (Va.) railroad, and cut and crushed into an undistinguishable, gory mass, and yet a watch that he had in his pocket was not in any way injured, nor even stopped.

A couple of little boys, living in Flatbush avenue, were playing, one day lately, with a pair of muskets and bayonets belonging to their elder brothers, and one of them, stumbling, fell upon the other's bayonet, and received a dangerous wound.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JUNE 22, 1861.

THE CAUSE OF THE ENORMOUS AND UNPARALLELED CIRCULATION OF THE LEDGER.—We pay more money for contributions by popular and eminent writers, in order to make a great and good paper, than is paid by any ten other literary papers in the country; and, as a legitimate result, our circulation is larger than the combined circulation of any ten others.

WE always stop the LEDGER at the expiration of the year, or the time for which it is paid, so that if you wish to continue, it it would be well to renew your subscriptions at least one week before the time expires.

NO TRAVELLING AGENTS.—We employ no travelling agents. If any party pretends to act as such you can put him down as a swindler.

WE CANNOT change the address of a subscriber, unless he gives us his *former*, as well as his present address.

REJECTED MANUSCRIPTS.—We will not return rejected manuscripts.

OUR ONLY TERMS.—Single copies, $2 per annum; two copies, $3; four copies, $6; eight copies, $12. Postmasters and others who get up clubs can afterwards add single copies at $1,50. The party who sends us $12 for a club of eight copies, (all sent at one time,) will be entitled to a copy *free*. Terms, invariably in advance. No subscriptions taken for a less period than one year. Canada subscribers must send twenty-six cents in addition to the subscription, to pay the American postage, which is half a cent a copy on every paper. The notes of all specie-paying banks taken at par. When a draft or check can conveniently be sent, it will be preferred, as it will prevent the possibility of the loss of money by mail. ☞ We employ no travelling agents.

TREATMENT OF CHILDREN.

"Spare the rod, and spoil the child." The history of humanity has never been written, for all annals are of grown people, and only those engaged in political or ecclesiastical contests. The child—"the father of the man"—above all, has thus far had no historian, and it has been the great sufferer. There is hardly a man of a certain or uncertain age who does not recur with indignation to the infernal treatment he met with at school, and remember many joys blighted by persons placed in control over him. Our literature is just beginning to be awake to the fact that, of all things, the child is the most sensitive. God's youthful image full of life and love, incorrupt, confiding, gentle, heaven-hoping, filling all creation with wondrous imaginings, has been rated as dirt to be moulded to narrow-souled bigotry, local and personal ignorance, and to be subordinate always to the unquestioned whim, caprice, and tyranny of adult masters.

The world has been full of books. There were many even when scribes had to reproduce them. There are infinitely more now with the resources of printing. But it was reserved for the literature of the last twenty years to show a writer who had the genius to strike a blow for children abused and insulted, in "comfortable homes," in dreary school-houses, in devilish factories.

OLIVER TWIST is the grand epic of the sorrows of youth born of shame and penury. DAVID COPPERFIELD is the fierce, sad story of boyhood crushed and macerated by the diabolic spirit of a stepfather under the guise of a wholesome disciplinarian.

Let parents remember that each child is a fresh immortal being, differing from them both. Let them not overlay the child's genius with too much creed, too much exactitude, too much doing everything at the sound of the bell. Common sense, so vaunted, is valuable, but it never discovered a new continent, or invented a new world-revolutionizing agent. As ordinarily interpreted, it is apt to save up small things and miss great ones; to belittle existence by automaton rules, to stifle the holy of holies, the Creative Soul, and to rob life of love's throbs. The child should never fear a parent. The instant it does so, one or the other better be dead. It is this accurst spirit of fear which has ruled most households where the softness of gentle breeding has not entered. It imparts gloom, hypocrisy, and lays the seeds of crime. The worst boys at school are those controlled by the severest home discipline, where some thick-headed father brings his mental pint-pot to measure the infinitudes of the universe, and probably stifles the intelligence of a "mute, inglorious Milton," who works off his spirits, repressed in the house, by desperate insubordination elsewhere.

The men who know how to win the affections of a child are very rare. Dear Oliver Goldsmith painted one in his "Burchell." The character was himself. Charles Dickens is most delighted in romping with children. Women are of course much better than men in these regards, but their electricity in gaining the love of little ones is far from being so general as is ordinarily supposed. The child is truer than the man. Each day to him is as the first day in Paradise. He is not distressed as to what happened thousands or hundreds of years ago. He is not bothered about the precise number of persons in the Amphyctionic council, discussions on the *logos*, nor does he howl over Fox's Book of Martyrs, or the Massacre of the Huguenots. He knows not fictitious distinctions, or whether he is playing with a king's or a knife-grinder's son, unless he be told, and unless he be dragooned into being an hereditary ape. The child learns most when he does not know he is learning. Give him fresh air and sports with foreign boys, and he will be a critic in their language in a year. Twenty years of desk-study over Latin or Greek will not give him a tithe of equal verbal facility, and the power to think, to be impassioned, to dream in either language. Two or three hours' study for children is ample. Beyond that the attention flags, and the bodily system suffers. The old system of training and flogging was brutal; it was meaner than that of savages. In the guidance of children, let us not take the rules of warlike tribes circumfused and blinded by filthy polygamy. The man who recommended flogging children knew not children. Be gentle with them. Caress them. Amuse them. Find out the mainspring of their humanity, and touch it skillfully. Be as a child to a child. But strike a child—never.

◆

A GOOD SOLDIER COUNTS THE COST.

There is an opinion afloat in the world that the hero is a man who is never afraid. If that were true, there were no heroes, for there is no such man. Fear is an essential part of human character. The instinctive dread, not of death only, but of all that causes, resembles, or accompanies death, is necessary to the preservation of the species, and of every species. Lions and tigers are often afraid; nay, are very easily frightened, unless their terrors are swallowed up in a stronger passion. If fear had been totally left out of the composition of lions, the leonine race would have become extinct very soon after its creation.

One of our American authors well remarks that nature has made those passions exceedingly strong and alert which are necessary to the perpetuation of our species. The two principal ones are love and fear. It was needful that we should instinctively, without delay, without thinking about it, *shrink* from everything that endangers life. It was necessary that all the avenues to the seat of life should be guarded with myriads of nerves, each capable of making the entire frame writhe with agony.

No; the bravest of living men is capable of fear. The Duke of Wellington used to say that no man ever went into battle for the first time without feeling a good deal of dread and apprehension. "If any man denies it," he would add, "I set him down as a coward."

"When I was a young man," says old John Adams, "I had a great desire to be a soldier, and it is a question with me to this day whether I should have been a hero or a coward."

It has never been a question with anybody else. John Adams would have been a hero. He had patriotism, intelligence, principle, spirit, pride, and a robust constitution. He would certainly have done his duty in the field, as he did in scenes not less trying. Moreover, his candid admission of the possibility of his proving a coward, is itself an indication of valor. If we were forming a regiment, we should distrust, more than any one else, the man who should profess to be unacquainted with fear, or who should repel with indignation, contempt or derision, a suggestion of the possibility of his ever being afraid.

The brave man is he who, carrying into danger all human instincts and passions, has that within him which is stronger than these—love of country, sense of duty, self-respect. The brave man is he who, knowing what life is worth, knows also that without self-approval it is worthless. The brave man is he who comprehends that one of the necessities of a good and honorable person is a country to be proud of, since great lives can only be led in great and free countries. The brave man *begins* by giving his life to his country. He takes with him into battle a life that he has already *devoted* to the cause he fights for. If he comes out alive, why, it is a clear and unexpected gain.

◆

HUMAN TIGERS.

On the western coast of Africa, not more than two hundred and fifty miles from the civilized negro republic of Liberia, lies the little barbarian kingdom of Dahomey, a "corner of land" not much larger than the State of Delaware, and containing about two hundred thousand inhabitants. Several months ago we published in the LEDGER, an article referring to the manners, customs and mode of life of this most blood-thirsty of all slaughter-loving tribes. We mentioned that the father of the reigning king had recently died, and that the pious son proposed in due time to celebrate the obsequies of his much respected parent, by cutting an immense number of throats, and navigating, in his state canoe, a red sea derived from the veins of the victims. It appears, by recent advices from western Africa, that his butcherly majesty has fulfilled his promise to the letter. The blood of seven thousand of his slaughtered subjects, let into an excavation made for the purpose, furnished him with a crimson lake sufficiently broad and deep for his meditated pleasure excursion. On a given day he embarked, and his slaves rowed him backward and forward over the slaughter pond, until it was supposed that the sanguinary ghost of his papa, king Ghezo, was thoroughly appeased. Murder, torture and war seem to be the principal recreations in Dahomey. Rum mixed with human blood, and imbibed from fresh skulls, is a popular drink among all classes. The flower of the royal army consists of a female brigade five thousand strong, who have the post of honor in all battles, and are said to display a keener relish for every species of fiendish atrocity than the male soldiers.

Dahomey offers a fine field for missionary enterprise—a field that, so far as we are aware, has never been cultivated. If an attempt was ever made to christianize the "blood tubs" of that fief of Pandemonium, the parties engaged in it were probably offered up as a sacrifice to the leopards, boa constrictors and ground sharks devoutly worshipped by the Dahomese. Seriously, it is a disgrace to civilization that such awful atrocities as those practised in Dahomey should be permitted in any accessible part of the world. Some powerful nation ought to seize upon the country, colonize it, and reform the morals of its debased people, and demoniac rulers, with the strong hand.

◆

DISPATCHES FROM THE SEAT OF WAR.

That unreliable jade, Madam Rumor, seems to have supreme command of all the electro-magnetic batteries in the country, and she works them with a disregard for truth and consistency somewhat aggravating to the public. Falstaff's different versions of the "men-in-buckram" story, are models of congruity to the contradictions that chase one another over the wires, from Washington to all parts of the North. "Special correspondents" have always been in the habit of dressing up the same facts in various styles, but now they sometimes give the lie to their own statements three or four times in the course of as many "edishins." They will fight you a terrific battle, with artillery, Minié rifles, and cold steel at 3 P. M.; and two hours later eat their own horrors, balls, shells, sabres, bayonets, smoke, blood and groans, in an errata of half-a-dozen lines! There is another remarkable feature in the communications of these "specials." They almost invariably contain statistical accounts of the military condition and capabilities of the different sections of the country—all purporting to be derived from the "best authority," no two of which bear the slightest resemblance to each other.

All this is, of course, very exciting; and with the aid of startling headings and exclamation points, backed by the vocal efforts of the newsboys, it makes the papers sell. And yet it seems to us that it is more creditable to get a living by sawing wood than by deceiving the public at a crisis like the present.

◆

THE LOVELY MONTH OF JUNE.

Roses a-bloom—wheat preparing to ear—grass rank enough for the scythe—strawberries blushing in their beds as if conscious of their own tempting sweetness—each of these is a sign as significant as that in the Zodiac just entered by the Sun, that Summer has commenced. What a glorious twelfth of the year is this month of June. The temperature is delicious, the air an invisible exhilarant, full of the elements of health and enjoyment. There is no other month in which the world looks so young and lovely as in this. One would think Nature was in her teens instead of being six or seven thousand years old—be the same more or less. Probably the fields and forests of the ante-diluvian earth were no greener than those we look upon to-day. Sin and sorrow have marred and blighted the physical and moral beauty of the human race, but herb, and flower, and tree, and all the garnishing of this fair world, are doubtless as fresh and beautiful now, as in the days of Adam.

The Romans called the month of June *mensis juniorum*, or the month of the younger people; but as it is enjoyed with equal zest by the maturer members of the human family, we cannot see the propriety of dedicating it exclusively to the girls and boys.

◆

HARSH words are like hailstones in summer, which, if melted, would fertilise the tender plants they batter down.

THE MASSACRE AT FORT MIMMS.

Soon after the commencement of the war of 1812, that wonderful man, Tecumseh, the greatest warrior and orator ever produced in savage life, left his home in the North, and suddenly appeared among the half-civilized tribes of the South, whom, with that natural and fiery eloquence of which he was master, he upbraided for their effeminate pusillanimity, their degenerate civilization, counseling them to be warriors and men, and not women, to throw off the pale-face garments that disgraced them, resume their original costume, dig up the hatchet, declare eternal war against the Americans, and once more become sons worthy of their brave and noble sires.

The fiery eloquence of Tecumseh was not lost upon his red brothers, and upon none was it more effective than the Creeks. It did not result in immediate hostility, but it was seed sown in productive soil; and though the more wise and prudent rejected his fanatical counsel, a large portion received it as inspired language from the lips of a prophet. To this was soon added the tampering of British agents with the Creeks and Seminoles residing in the territory owned by Spain. At the town of Pensacola, firearms and various other presents were freely distributed among all the Indians who could be induced to assemble there to receive them, and they were urged to declare immediate war against the United States, and get as many to assist them as possible. All this led the bolder and more warlike spirits to become dissatisfied with their hitherto peaceful mode of life, and in the end resulted in a terrible and bloody uprising.

Some fearful indications of this newly-awakened hostility soon became manifest along the borders; small parties of soldiers were attacked, houses were here and there burned, and men, women and children butchered. In view of these fresh troubles, the governors of Georgia and Tennessee were required by the Federal Government to arm their militia, and General Jackson was ordered to march with two thousand men, and put down the insurrection. He proceeded through the Choctaw and Chickasaw country as far as Natchez, when, finding all quiet, he returned with his army to the North.

But no sooner had General Jackson left the country, than the same aggressive acts were resumed in a bolder manner. A few of the Indians, who remained friendly to the United States, were assailed by the furious war-party, and bloody contests resulted among themselves; negroes were incited to rise against their masters and join the insurgents; the whole immediate country became a scene of the wildest alarm, and such of the settlers as could not escape to the northward, deserted their plantations, collected together, and immediately erected and established themselves in forts. Several of these were constructed on the Mobile and its different branches, but unfortunately too far apart to be of any assistance to each other in a time of peril.

To one of these, Fort Mimms, we will now direct attention, and attempt to give some faint idea of the horrid scene which was there enacted. The story was told some years ago to a friend of ours, by one of the survivors, and we repeat it as nearly in the language of the narrator as we have been able to gather it.

"Our fort," said the narrator, "was a rude affair, built after the manner of the wilderness, and consisted of log-cabins and stockades, with a large area in the centre. Within this enclosure—of families and volunteers, men, women and children, black and white—were collected something like three hundred souls. The garrison, about a hundred strong, was commanded by Major Beasly, a brave and noble officer, but an imprudent one withal, arising from an over-confidence in his own resources and a contempt for the foe.

"Various rumors reached us, from time to time, that the Indians were preparing to attack the different stations throughout the country. This at first created no little excitement and alarm in our community, and the Major went so far as to make a few repairs and double the guard at night; but as time passed on, and no Indians appeared, even the timid and cautious began to grow more indifferent than was prudent for a people situated as we were.

"One day, toward the latter part of August, a messenger arrived, saying the Creeks were abroad in great force, that they had fully declared war against the United States, and were about to attempt the taking of all the stations in detail, beginning with Fort Mimms.

"'We have heard just the same report more than once before,' replied Major Beasly, 'and yet not a savage has ventured to show himself in our vicinity.'

"'Their scouts have been here and reconnoitered the place when you little dreamed of it,' rejoined the messenger, 'and I tell you they are now on their way here to attack you?'

"'Have you seen them?'

"'Not myself, but my information is none the less reliable.'

"'Very well, sir, we will see to it,' was the closing answer of the Major.

"The news of the messenger created fresh alarm among the women and children; and a few of the garrrison, myself among the number, thought our commander made too light of even a possible danger, considering how many helpless beings there were under his charge, who might fall victims to the slightest neglect; but the majority of the men thought with Beasly, that if even the report of the Indians being abroad in great numbers was true, they would not attack a place where they would be so certain to be repulsed with great slaughter. Our post was considered impregnable to any mere savage assault, and our overweening confidence in our fancied strength became the weakness by which we fell.

"The fatal thirtieth of August, 1813—ah! never shall I forget it! It was about the hour of noon, of a hot, sultry day, and I was sitting in the shade of the houses, playing with a little curly-haired boy, my musket leaning against the palisades a few yards distant, when suddenly the sentinel fired his piece, and shouted:

"'To arms! to arms! the Indians are upon us!'

"Groups of men, who were lounging about, instantly sprung to their feet, grasped their weapons, and made a rush to the gate, which had carelessly been left wide open for the purpose of allowing persons to pass in and out at their convenience. At the same moment a large body of Indians bounded forward, with the most appalling yells, and poured in a destructive volley. Several fell dead, and many others were severely wounded. We returned the fire—those of us who had been able to seize our muskets and get first to the defence—and numbers of the dusky foe were sent howling to the dust. Then began a most terrible fight and slaughter on both sides. The Indians, in a large compact body, were crowding forward to force their way in through the open gate, and we were striving to drive them back and shut them out. It was a hand-to-hand encounter, in which every sort of weapon was used. We stabbed them with bayonets, cut them with knives, knocked them down with muskets and bludgeons, and split open their skulls with axes. They fought in the same manner, with a tiger-like ferocity, and with about equal success. Our yells and theirs mingled, as we grappled in the work of death, and white friend and dusky foe soon strewed the earth around, locked in a last bloody embrace.

"At length a body rushed past us and took possession of one of the block-houses; and as this somewhat thinned the immediate crowd at the gate, we were enabled, by redoubled exertions, to close and secure it. This gave us a momentary respite, and one we greatly needed, for our terrible exertions had nearly overcome us. For a minute I stood leaning against one of the palisades, panting and scarcely able to stand. I had received no serious injury, but I was much cut and bruised, and covered with blood from head to foot. Before me was a most horrible and sickening sight. Not less than ten of my comrades, and some fifteen savages, lay dead within a space of twenty feet square, with cloven skulls, glaring, death-glazed eyes, and bloody, distorted visages; while all around were wounded and dying men, whose deep groans and maddening shrieks were awful to hear. Among these was Major Beasly, who, in gallantly attempting to repair his error, had fallen mortally wounded, and would command us no more. A large number of women, with the wildest cries of distress and woe, now came rushing forth from the cabins, in search of fathers, sons, husbands and brothers; and as fast as they could they bore away their friends, the wounded, dying and dead, with lamentations that pierced the heart and rent the air. It was an awful scene; but there was one more awful yet to come.

"The Indians without the fort now rushed forward in a body, and poured a murderous fire through the loop-holes, by which a number of both sexes was killed and wounded. We now charged upon the loop-holes, forced back the enemy, and gave him a galling fire in return. As soon as the savages could reload their weapons, they rallied and again charged upon the fort, and we in turn were obliged to give way. This species of warfare was continued for more than an hour, numbers falling on both sides. Meantime, from one of the block-houses, a destructive fire was being poured upon the assailants, and in the other a most fearful struggle was taking place. The Indians who had rushed past us at the gate, had taken possession of this, and it was necessary to dislodge them. This could only be accomplished by a close and deadly encounter, during which so many fell on both sides that the place literally ran with blood like a slaughter-house. At length it was carried over the dead bodies of every Indian in it, and the guns turned upon the foe without, who now for the first time fell back in dismay. This again gave us a little respite, which we employed in putting to death every savage within the walls.

"We now began to indulge the hope that the Indians, being so signally repulsed, would withdraw altogether; but in this we were terribly disappointed. Their bold and sanguinary chief, one Weatherford by name, collected, harangued, and urged them to a renewal of the contest, promising them success. He told them they had come to the assault numbering two to one of all the fort contained, counting men, women and children; and if they did not carry it, and avenge the death of their companions, by an utter extermination of the whites, they would be forever disgraced, and be pointed at by even squaws as cowards unfit to live. His words roused in them the most vindictive fury; and procuring axes, they returned to the attack with all the ferocity of demons.

"Our first knowledge of this fresh assault filled us with the most heart-sickening dismay. With the most appalling yells, a large body rushed to the gate and began to hew it down, the immediate assailants being covered by another large body of sharpshooters, who, concealing themselves behind every available breast-work, kept up a steady fire upon the loop-holes. We now, indeed, felt that our doom was sealed; but being determined to sell our lives dearly, we ordered the women into the cabins, and returned boldly to the defence, doing all that men in our situation could do.

"Alas! of what avail? One by one our ranks were thinned, till at length the gate gave way with a crash, and, with the wildest yells of triumph, the dusky horde came pouring into the area. Our only alternative was now to rush into the cabins, make a last stand, and die with the women and children, for no one had any hope of escape.

"The doors were thrown open by the terrified watchers of the strife, and most of the then living garrison succeeded in passing in and closing them; but several were overtaken, and either tomahawked or shot at the very thresholds. Two companions entered the same apartment with myself, and in there was a sight that at any less fearful time would have made our hearts ache. A wife lay in a swoon by the dead body of her husband; a prattling child had a hand of the bloody corse, and was trying to make it speak; a trembling old man, with white hair, was kneeling on the ground, and sobbing, with bowed head; there were women flying to and fro in a distracted state, wringing their hands, crying and shrieking; and there were two or three wounded men, groaning and dying.

"But to all these we gave little heed. Our work was still to fight to the last, and die with the rest; and we began to load and fire through the windows upon the savages, who, with yells of exultation, were now busy killing the wounded and tearing the reeking scalps from all.

"I know not how long it was after this before the appalling cry of fire arose. Our foes had succeeded in setting the roofs in a blaze, and now began to beat in the doors. Then such a shriek of horror as rent the air from the lips of women and children! Oh, merciful God! it was terrible beyond description! Even imagination sinks before it. It was paralyzing.

"How I got to the burning roof I scarcely know; but I remember the flames of fire playing about me, of bursting through them, of leaping to the ground, of running to the wood, of stopping my ears against the shrieks behind! I escaped, but God only knows how. Sixteen others miraculously escaped also. All the rest perished, either in the flames or by the hands of their savage butchers. It was a massacre almost without a parallel. The blackened ruins of Fort Mimms held the bones of nearly three hundred victims of savage ferocity!"

◆

ZOUAVES.—The many different pronunciations of this much-used word are afflicting to intelligent ears. Some call it *Zou*-aves, others pronounce it *Zoo*-aves, the accent strong on the first syllable, while some say Zoo-*aves* with the accent on the last syllable. We have not unfrequently heard it pronounced *Zoo-vees*; and not a few respectable citizens have assailed our ears with the barbarous word *Zou-vees*. The pronunciation of the word is plain and simple. It consists of but one syllable—*Zwahves*.

◆

UNRIPE FRUIT.—The decayed, sun-baked fruit which is hawked about the streets at this season of the year might be classed among the vegetable poisons. A bullet could hardly be a worse guest for the stomach. Being sold cheap, it is eagerly bought by poor people and by children, who devour it without the slightest regard to life or death. Let everybody beware of it, for at least a "summer complaint" lurks in every penny's-worth.

DEAR CRAZY GOTHAM.

"De'il take the hindmost" should be written on every man, woman, child, door-post, street, corner, dray-cart, cab, cat and dog in Gotham. It is the first trait that presents itself to the bewildered stranger. The daily nuisances in the shape of encumbered sidewalks, which a busy public scramble over, tear their clothes and stub their toes against, day after day, for the temporary convenience of some private individual—owner of a store or house, without ever taking breath to inquire by what right they thus incommode a long-suffering public. The way the milkmen, sitting in their carts, shriek out their unearthly yells, disturbing sick people and babies, every morning in the year, instead of getting off their perch, and going quietly to the back-gate with their milky treasures, as in scandal-loving Boston. The horribly thriftless way in which strawberries are brought to market, in petty little three or six cent baskets, exposed to dust and sun, instead of being nicely hulled and packed in a covered box, after being spread over with dewy green leaves, all ready for instant use. The wretched cow-bells attached to the crazy carts of itinerant rag-men, that ding-dong into your very brain day after day; the prolonged howls and horns of fishmen and rag-men, which everybody execrates, and yet nobody has time to drive away; the horrible smoking nuisance, without the slightest regard to the female portion of pedestrianism, in our public thoroughfares. The shocking expectoration across narrow omnibuses and *over shrinking female shoulders, out of omnibus windows*, and over shrinking female faces from the roof; the foul plastered straw in which your foot plunges in its floor—ugh!—be these "*gentlemen*" prithee? The utter impossibility of getting any job done in New York, short of building a meeting-house, under a three years' dunning-process of workmen so much in demand, that they can well afford to let your blind or door swing on its hinge till it drops off, or your roof leak till you are drowned. In short, the general pell-mell scramble, jostle, hurry, rush and row, from one day to another—well I've got used to it now, and I dare say I should stagnate without it, but I nearly died in the process of becoming Gotham-ized. FANNY FERN.

◆

UNNATURAL YOUTH.

Coldness and apathy we look for with advancing years. They do not displease us; but what shall be said of a young man, in the flush of youth and health, ignoring public events, or looking at them as he would look at the shifting scenes of a panorama, got up by some tricksy showman for an hour's amusement. He has no definite aim or object, save to secure himself as easy and amusing an existence as possible, and for this purpose selfishly dodges at all cost of honor or self-respect, any personal discomfort or inconvenience. Every thing serious or earnest glides off his impenetrable shell of selfishness like water off a turtle's back. The signal for action, is the signal for him to draw in his head, and comfortably know nothing of what is passing outside. If you address him on any earnest topic of the hour, he turns it aside with a joke, or parries it with a compliment; or if you are too knowing to be caught in this last stale trap, he looks upon you with contemptuous pity, as a bewitched enthusiast. Nations may rise and fall, but the only smoke *he* cares about is cigar-smoke. If he gets enough of that, at the right hour, you are welcome to the last *bullet—in!*

We have no words to express our disgust, in a day like this, of the spectacle of a young man thus yawning away existence, so far as any benefit to the great public welfare, through him, is concerned; taking for his inglorious motto, let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die. Thank God their number is few. The creature is misplaced in creation. His well knit limbs should be encased in a petticoat, and a subscription should be immediately raised to present him with a sewing-machine, unless, indeed, the *steel* used in the machinery should be objectionable to his sensitive organization. He should immediately resign his hat to some bonnet, whose owner never so bitterly bewails the fate that assigned her one, as when she sees so sorry a sight as this, when every moment is the hinge of a great event, and the hand-to-hand conflict of life is broken only by the hoarse whisper of brother to brother, "how goes the battle?"

FANNY FERN.

◆

BOY SOLDIERS.

The war fever has reached the children. The very babies are in arms. Every street has its home-guard of juveniles. We saw the other day in Hudson street, a company of six-year-old "Continentallers" in full revolutionary rig, commanded by a young gentleman about four feet high, attired in the uniform of a general officer of Washington's army, and wearing under his three cocked hat a well-powdered wig, with a formidable queue. The members of the company were all nearly of the same hight and age, and the gravity with which they marched along the sidewalk, to the music of a couple of *real* drums, would have done honor to veterans. The Zouave dress is, however, must in vogue with our Lilliputian infantry. Red pants and red caps, with gold tassels, are in universal request among heroic youths of from five to twelve years of age, and mothers and sisters find it difficult to supply the demand. We should say, at a rough guess, that Fourteenth street and Fifth Avenue, could turn out, to-day, nearly two hundred Zouaves of tender years, fully equipped and eager for mischief. The uniforms of many of these youngsters are rich and costly, and they may be seen parading the up-town streets and squares every fine day after school hours, very much in the style of military children of a larger growth.

It must not be supposed, however, that these little cadets of our "first families" are a whit more ardent and enthusiastic in their soldiery than the rough and ragged urchins that run wild about the streets. This is no silk stocking movement. The small *gamins* of our *Rue St. Antoine* have gone into it with all their childish hearts and souls. One sees them every day in the bye-streets, mustering by scores, with sticks for muskets, paper caps for shakos, and cracked tin pots for drums, looking just as happy in their "looped and windowed raggedness," as if they had been born with silver spoons in their mouths, and formed a portion of the world's gilt gingerbread.

Judging from the present belligerent attitude of little boys of every class, we should say that the military greatness of our country is as yet in its infancy.

◆

IT is common to regard milk as little less than mere drink. But this is an error. Milk is really an article of solid food, being coagulated soon after reaching the stomach. New milk contains thirteen per cent. of digestible solids, and skimmed milk ten per cent.; the former fully one half, and the latter above a third of the nutriment contained in the lean part of beef and mutton.

◆

USEFUL QUALITY.—A wag purchased a very fine horse. Returning from a ride a few days afterwards, he said he had discovered a quality in his animal which added a few pounds to his value—"he shied at a lawyer!"

SUPPLICATION.

BY ALICE CARY.

O thou, who all my life hast crowned
With better things than I could ask,
Be it to-day my humble task
To own from depths of grief profound,
The many sins, which darken through
What little good I do.

I have been too much used, I own.
To tell my needs in fretful words—
The clamoring of the silly birds,
Impatient till their wings be grown,
Have thy forgiveness. O, my blessed Lord,
The like to me accord.

Of grace, as much as will complete
Thy will in me, I pray thee for,
Even as a rose shut in a drawer
That maketh all about it sweet,
I would be, rather than the cedar fine,—
Help me, thou Power divine.

With charity fill thou my heart,
As Summer fills the grass with dews,
And as th' year itself renews
In th' Sun, when Winter days depart,
Blessed forever, grant thou me
To be renewed in Thee.

THE HUNTED FELON;

OR,

THE FORTUNE-TELLER OF LYNN.

A ROMANCE OF THE OLDEN TIME.

BY MRS. C. F. GERRY.

CHAPTER XIII.—Continued.

A week after the arrest of Gault and his comrades in guilt, the trial took place. At an early hour the court-room was thronged with spectators, and a regiment of soldiers kept guard outside. At length the magistrates, with their curled and powdered wigs, and robes of office, took their seats on the bench, and then a band of musicians were heard playing "the Rogue's March," and the three prisoners were led in, and placed in the dock. The crowd surged forward, for all were anxious to obtain a glimpse of the hunted felons. Gault wore his usual stolid aspect, and braved it out like the trained desperado that he was. Ross was flushed and restless, and Heathcote pale, silent, despairing. The sheriff opened the court with the usual formalities, and the prisoners rose to answer to the indictment, which charged Ross with the crime of murder, and the others as having been his accomplices. All pleaded Not Guilty, and the counsel for the prosecution, after a few remarks, proceeded to summon his witnesses.

"Moll Pitcher, come into court," shouted the sheriff.

"Moll Pitcher, come into court!" echoed a voice near the door, and the sibyl of High Rock glided through the throng, and took her station.

"Let the witness be sworn," said the attorney, and the oath was duly administered. Heathcote started as if some pale sleeper from a chancel vault had risen to confront him, and even Gault winced, for they thought her face boded no good.

"May it please your worships," she began, in the thrilling voice peculiar to her, "I lived at Lynn, when this horrid murder was perpetrated. I heard the alarm given by the terror-stricken boy, and was among the first who reached the Pirate's Glen. I found the poor woman weltering in her gore, I saw the broken dagger, the trampled, blood-stained grass, and from her stiffened fingers I took a lock of hair, which she tore from the head of her murderer. I have kept it—here it is, and I now resign it to your worships." There was a profound sensation as she laid the black lock before the magistrates, and all listened intently when, after a brief pause, she continued:

"On returning to my home, I saw a gentleman near the door. I asked him why he was there, and he said he wished my advice on an important matter. He followed me into the house, where three sailors were waiting for me, but told them those who had come first should be served first. He seated himself, and did not appear to heed anything around him, till Gervayse Gault came rushing in, and cried, 'Mother Moll, Captain Ward has offered five hundred pounds for the apprehension of his daughter's murderer—put me on the track, and I'll share the reward with you!' I sharply reprimanded him for thinking only of gold at such a time, and then Ralph Heathcote sprang up, and inquired what had happened. I told Mabel Ward's story, and his emotion during the recital aroused my suspicions, that if he had not done the deed, he had been an accomplice. I set a sibyl's arts aside, and brought my woman's wits to discover the felon. I produced the lock of hair I had taken from her fingers; I declared her face peering from the dusky corners of the room, and from my magic cup—I demanded why she thus haunted me, and asked if it were possible her murderers could be in my presence! The sailors asserted, with the pride of honest manhood, that they were innocent; Heathcote was dumb till Gault recalled him to his senses by asserting that he supposed they could all say the same, when Heathcote solemnly affirmed he knew nothing of the deed till he entered my house. On Gault's hinting that he must have a sympathetic nature, he said he was a cousin of Captain Ward's, had come to visit the family, and should have gone there at once, had he not thought it too late to trespass on their hospitality. I resolved not to tell his fortune that night, and set out for the Glen, my visitors following me. When we reached the scene of the murder, I kept my eye upon Heathcote, and his appearance confirmed my suspicions. He had pretended to be a stranger to Gault, but I saw enough that night to convince me they were old friends. When I reached my home, and sat down for reflection, I remembered a conversation I had overheard one stormy night at Nahant between Gault and Antoine Lafarge, a Frenchman, who had recently taken up his abode in a hut near Irene's Grotto. They chuckled over the success of some scheme they had set afoot—said the Lynn people were rather inquisitive, but they had managed to mislead them, and that they had laid a fatal train, which would be ignited as soon as the person against whom they were plotting should land on our shores. And that person I have since had reason to believe was Mabel Ward."

"And when was it that you overheard their talk?" queried the attorney.

"Three weeks before the murder was committed; and Gault expressed a dread of me, as, if I were a witch, I could read their hearts through any mask they could wear, and old Antoine suggested that gold might bribe me to silence. From my hiding-place, I bade them beware how they trifled with Moll Pitcher. Startled and affrighted, they searched the immediate neighborhood, but I knew the recesses of the grotto better than they, and I have since heard they came to the conclusion that the speaker was an idiot boy who acted in the capacity of servant to Gault. Well, I resolved to keep a sharp look-out, and I have. A week ago, with two Boston officials and my husband, I entered a room next door to Heathcote's at the Golden Fleece. We loosened a panel a bit, and saw a person admitted to Heathcote's chamber. He seemed to be an old man, and even his host did not recognize him through his disguise, till he asserted he was John Ross. A long conversation ensued, and we learned that my suspicions were well founded—that Heathcote had bribed Ross to commit the murder, and Gault had assisted him in his preparations, and in concealing him afterward. My testimony is now closed!"

She retired, and her evidence was substantiated by the two officers she had mentioned, and Robert Pitcher, her husband. Then the sheriff exclaimed—

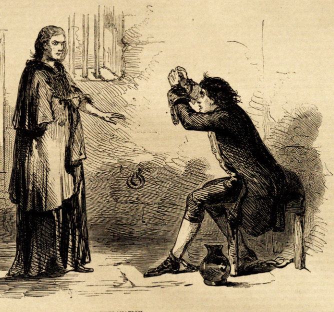
"The vailed witness will come into the court!"

"The vailed witness will come into the court!" reiterated the usher, and old Captain Ward and his wife appeared, supporting between them a woman, veiled from head to foot. Slowly, slowly they led her to the witness stand, where a capacious easy chair had been provided for her.

The oath was taken, her thick crape veil was flung back, revealing a face scarcely less pallid than when it had gleamed in the spectral moonlight, which ever and anon shot through the boughs of the cedars and pines of the Pirate's Glen, but the face of Mabel Ward Heathcote nevertheless! For an instant the guilty trio in the dock leaned forward in an agony of shame and fear; a howl of rage and despair broke from Gault, a curse from Ross, a wild, wailing cry from Heathcote.

"My God," he muttered, clinging to the heavy railing, "the dead has risen—the dead has risen!"

"No!" shouted Captain Ward, "my daughter lives! Thank God! thank God! she lives to bear testimony against a gang of villains so vile, that they ought to suffer a thousand deaths if possible. The night of the tragedy at Lynn, while my heart seemed breaking with grief, Moll Pitcher drew me aside, and whispered that, as she stood near Mabel's feet, she had perceived a slight warmth, and about the heart also. She



AN EXPLANATION.

gave it as her opinion that the wound was not deep enough to cause death; and, fired with a new hope, I had my daughter and her child borne home immediately. I carried Mabel into the chamber which had been fitted up for her reception, and summoned Watkins, a woman who had once been a nurse in a London hospital. I told her that there were some signs of life about her, and remained with her an hour. We cleansed and dressed the wounds, placed flasks of warm water at her feet, chafed her cold hands, and administered cordials, till we felt sure she was yet alive. Then I went to my wife, who was almost insane, and breathed a word of consolation; when I left her I met Moll Pitcher. She had been with nurse Watkins, and brought potent herbs, which the Indians had given her. She and I held a brief interview, in which she planned far better than I could have done in my excitement. She proposed that what we had discovered with regard to Mabel should be kept a secret, till the felon who had murdered her child, and left her apparently dead, should be brought to justice, as the authorities would feel more interested in the search, and I could not rest till I knew my daughter's foe. By Moll's advice, I decided to bury an empty coffin with that of little Agnes, and not even Grace was told who the ghost was that haunted Mabel's chamber. The doctor who had attended my wife in her nervous attacks, nurse Watkins, Mrs. Ward, myself and Moll Pitcher, with the God who is over all, were the only ones that knew Mabel was yet alive. For months she was so weak that we had to use every precaution to prevent driving her to madness; while at Lynn, no words of mine can tell how feeble she was; and when we removed to Boston, the opening and shutting of a door, and indeed the slightest sound would send a thrill through her whole frame, and she would fancy somebody was in pursuit of her. We had the walls of her room stuffed like carriage cushions, that she might not hear the noise; and so in her chamber, which was in the wing opposite the drawing and dining-rooms, the apartments frequented by Heathcote, she never heard his voice. When she gained strength to tell me who her husband was, she said his name was Guy Hastings; afterward, when he was arrested, and I learned what a villain he was, I suspected he might have wooed and won her under an assumed name, and I carried into her chamber a portrait cousin Ralph had given me when high in my favor. With a shriek she recognized it—moaned, '*My husband! my husband!*' and swooned away. I will now sit down, and let her speak for herself, but, as God hears me, I have told the truth!"

"May it please the court," said the pale, wasted woman at his side, "I am the wife of the man known to you as Ralph Heathcote. I was sixteen when I met him at the house of a fortune-teller on Copp's Hill, whither I had gone with a gay girl of my acquaintance. As we entered, a handsome gentleman came out, and when, after having had our fortunes told, we started for home, and encountered some drunken rioters, he offered to escort us to my father's door. We gladly assented, and, on reaching the house, received no reprimand, as my parents were both gone. From that time he haunted me whenever I went out alone. He soon declared he had fallen in love with me at first sight, and in an evil hour I eloped with him. I believe he did love me then, for he treated me with the utmost tenderness, and on reaching Paris, our marriage was solemnized. Ours was a roving life; but I was happy till Zoe Gonzalez, a gipsy girl, with whose heart he had trifled before he saw me, unvailed something of his character. Then I grew wretched, and should have been desperate, had I not been blest with two sweet children."

She paused, as if to gain strength, and resumed:

"He kept up the semblance of affection till we went to Naples, and then he became harsh and neglectful. I was often hungry, and Agnes and Guy cried for bread. What could I do? I embroidered, I pawned my jewels, my rich clothing, for food for them, and tried to ascertain the cause of his conduct. Finally—the gipsy girl told me—that—that he had fallen desperately in love with a portrait—a portrait of a beautiful young American, and had sworn to desert me, follow her to her native land, and marry her. About this time our little Guy died, and I fondly dreamed this would arouse his conscience. But, no—he grew more sullen, more neglectful; blows took the place of caresses and endearing words!"

Again she stopped, and the throng swayed to and fro in breathless interest. A glass of wine was administered to the witness, and she proceeded:

"The gipsy girl talked of the stiletto, and the poisoned bowl, but God gave me strength to resist the temptation. I, however, kept a watch upon his movements—I listened at the key-hole, in the dead of night, when Gault was at our lodgings, and learned that the beautiful American was an heiress, had ten thousand pounds a year in her own right, and was, moreover, my cousin Grace! My resolution was soon taken: I would save her from ruin like mine, bear my living child to my old home, and die in my mother's arms. I left the Bay of Naples, flaming Vesuvius, and the child who slept dreamlessly in that continental city, and with my little Agnes sailed for America. I landed at Salem, and when I got there, I had not a farthing to pay for a conveyance to my home. I started on foot, and dragged myself and child on, till I reached what I know to be the Pirates' Glen. 'There! there! the time's come! and be sure and strike home!' exclaimed a voice which appeared strange to me. 'I will!' answered another voice. The next moment I was grappled by the throat, my child snatched from me—my precious child—my all! A wondrous strength seemed to nerve me; I fought desperately, but I was overpowered. Then I begged—begged for the life that was now, ah! so dear a boon. My prayers were disregarded—a mocking laugh answered me—the steel was plunged into my breast—and I knew no more till I awoke in my father's mansion, and saw, as in a trance, the face of nurse Watkins."

"And who was the murderer, who left you there, and flung your child into the Pirates' Well?" queried the prosecuting attorney.

"Neither of the three men who sit in the dock, though they have been proved accomplices. It was—it was—a negro, slender but supple, and with a pair of eyes which glared upon me like those of some wild beast."

"Have any negroes been arrested?" asked the counsel, addressing the sheriff.

"Yes, but we could prove nothing against them, and, besides, they were both too gigantic to be the person she has described."

"I think that must have been a mere disguise," exclaimed Captain Ward.

"Aye, old man, it was a disguise!" shrieked a voice which sent a thrill through every listener, and into the court-room stalked a woman, her feet bare and bruised, her form wasted to a shadow, her lips purple and swollen, her long, tangled hair dashed with many a gleam of silver, and her eyes emitting a strange, phosphoric glitter.

"I, Zoe Gonzalez—the daughter of a gipsy queen and a Spanish hidalgo, with the fire of two fierce nations in my blood—I stabbed Mabel Heathcote, and hurled her little Agnes into the well whose waters had once quenched the thirst of the fugitive pirates!"

Heathcote gave a sudden start, for till now he had supposed Ross the murderer; and even astute Moll Pitcher stood aghast. Zoe paused an instant to mark the effect of her words, and then resumed, in good English, but with a strong foreign accent:

"All you have heard of me in this trial, is true. When I discovered how false my English lover was, I grew desperate—I resolved to rise between him and his young wife, and wherever they went, I followed. I was the means of unmasking his black heart to her, but still I hated her with all the passionate hatred of which my race is capable. When she fled to her native land, I sailed in the same vessel which bore her from Genoa, but I wore a page's dress, and pretended to act in that capacity to my brother, who assumed the state of a Spanish nobleman. She never saw me without my jaunty cap, whose plumes drooped low over my face, and never suspected me, I am sure."

"No, no," responded Mabel.

"Well, when we reached Salem, I followed her, and as she started for Lynn, crept along, taking care not to lose sight of her. At last a voice from a thicket exclaimed:

"Zoe Gonzalez, is that you, dressed up like a man?" for I had exchanged my page's suit for the ordinary costume of young men. I looked round in surprise, and John Ross started from the place where he had been lurking. "Why are you here?" he asked.

"Because Ralph Heathcote's wife is here—I go where she goes!"

Ross laughed, and muttered:

"You hate her then as bad as ever?"

"Yes."

He drew a pistol from the folds of his blouse, and showed it to me, adding:

"I am going to shoot her—she walks but slowly—I shall soon overtake her!"

A terrible temptation seized upon me—revenge in that hour seemed sweet. "Let me do it—let me wipe out the long score I owe her," I whispered.

"Do you mean so?" he inquired, looking intently at me.

"I am not wont to jest on such subjects," was my reply; "see my hand is steady, my blood is on fire!"

"Well, will you take the pistols?"

"No, I have a poniard, which has never left me since I discovered Ralph's treachery!"

"But you must take this mask!" and he produced a black mask, through which my eyes glared as Mabel Heathcote tells you, like some wild beast's. He gave me a few directions, and as I started in pursuit, hissed: "Don't fail to make sure of it—be sure too to kill the brat!"

Near the place which they call the Pirate's Glen, I again saw Ross, who was skulking about; Mabel was not far in advance, toiling on with her child in her arms, and soon after he gave the signal, and bade me strike home. The rest of that terrible tragedy you know, but when the deed was done, when Mabel lay, with her pale face upturned to me, and little Agnes had ceased to shriek from the well, I would have given worlds, could I have brought them back to life. I fled, and soon learned that I had by my crime removed two obstacles which stood between Ralph Heathcote and the young Southern heiress. Maddened by grief and remorse, I threatened to expose Ralph, but Ross and Gault declared they would betray my secret if I did. My brother had died of an epidemic, which prevailed in Salem when we landed there, and I felt alone in the world. Rigid search was made for the felon, who had committed the murder, and I lay concealed among the marsh-grass, the caves and woods, in old mills and other places in the neighborhood, till fear drove me from the Colony of Massachusetts. Then, disguised in men's clothing, I journeyed through New Hampshire. Sometimes I ventured into a wayside inn, or a farmer's house, but there they talked of the Lynn murder, and I dared not stay! On reaching the quiet Shaker village in Canterbury, I thought I should be safe if I joined them, but I discovered that some of the men suspected me, and again pushed on. When I reached the solitudes of the White Mountains, I fancied I should find rest, but remorse drove me frantic. I was light of foot, and inured to hardship from my childhood, and you could not find me. 'Tis not toilsome journeyings that have wasted my strength and bloom, and whitened my hair at twenty-six! I'm dying of remorse!"

For a moment her voice died away, her emaciated figure swayed like a reed, when fierce winds sweep over it; but with a strong effort, she regained sufficient composure to proceed.

"I have still another revelation to make. Gervayse Gault, a notorious villain, who has had as many as a score of assumed names, was condemned to die in London. He escaped from Newgate, and with John Ross and several men of his stamp, formed an association, known in Europe as the Vulture League. Every member wears somewhere about his person a badge, with the device of a vulture, holding in his talons a writhing serpent. To this brotherhood Ralph Heathcote belongs, and being handsome and fascinating, is of great service. Finding the police on their track in Paris, they went to Italy, and in Naples, Heathcote, as his wife has told you, saw and fell in love with the portrait of Grace Ward. Gault deepened his passion by repeating what he had heard of her charms, and as she was vastly rich, and they just then out of business, a plot was laid to murder Mabel and child, and make Grace his bride. Her fortune was then to have been divided between Gault, who assumed the appearance of an honest laborer at the Iron Works; Ross, who figured as the mysterious pilot; Jacob Islington, who made shoes for a living; and Heathcote, who played the gentleman. The only proselyte they made in Lynn was Antoine Lafarge, who ought to be arrested. There—there—my story is told!"

An officer moved to her side, to keep guard, but with a sad smile, she murmured:

"Fear not! She who has voluntarily surrendered herself will not flee!"

After some consultation, the magistrates, jury, lawyers, decided that no other witnesses need be called, and the judge rose, and exclaimed:

"Zoe Gonzalez, since by you own confession, you are guilty of the murder of Agnes Heathcote by drowning in the Pirate's Well, you will be taken hence to jail, there to remain till you can be brought to trial in due form of law. And as the jury have, without retiring, given a verdict of Guilty in the case of you, Gervayse Gault, John Ross and Ralph Heathcote, the sentence of the court is that you each be taken hence to jail, there to remain until the third day of October next, and thence to be taken to the scaffold at two o'clock in the afternoon of that day, and then and there to be hanged by the neck until you are dead, and may God have mercy upon your souls!"

"Amen!" breathed a sweet, but solemn voice, and poor Mabel was borne out in a death-like swoon.

"And now," resumed the judge, "let the guard take back the prisoners!"

The sturdy man who had been watching Zoe, grasped her arm, and said:

"Come, come!"

There was no movement—no answer. He repeated his command, but she did not heed him. The next moment he lifted her, and turned her faded face to the light—she was dead!

"What is the matter!" queried the judge, as he perceived a stir around the felon so long hunted in vain.

"She will not require a guard, may it please your worship; she is dead—stone dead!"

"Dead?" gasped Heathcote, and the word ran from lip to lip like wild-fire, as the throng surged like ocean billows in their anxiety to obtain a glimpse of the Zincali girl.

"What can be done with her?"

"An inquest must be held."

And now the coroner came forward, and went through the usual formalities. Then a query arose as to where she should be buried.

"In the stranger's corner of the Copps Hill Burying Ground," said one.

"No, no," cried Hortense L'Estrange, rushing forward; "she shall not be buried like a dog! Take her up and follow me!"

She hastened from the court-room, and an hour later the gipsy girl lay shrouded for the grave. The other criminals were remanded to jail; and that night, as Heathcote sat brooding over his misfortunes, his prison-door was unlocked and Moll Pitcher entered. The young man started and shook his manacled hands in wild fury, shrieking:

"Curses on you, Moll Pitcher! You took my gold and played me false! If I had the power, you should not leave this cell alive!"

"But you have not the power;" and an exulting smile flashed over her face. "Aye, Master Ralph, I have a few words for your ear before you swing from the gallows! 'Twas not for love of Dick Crofton that I thwarted you—I had a selfish motive! Years ago, when I was a young and trusting girl, an Englishman came over in one of my father's vessels. A physician had prescribed a sea voyage and change of scene, and the invalid thought he should like to visit the wilds of America. At first he lodged at the inn, but after he saw me, he begged Capt. Dimond to board him. My father protested against it, declaring that he had no accomodations for gentle-folk. But he would not be denied, and was soon domesticated with us. He was handsome and stately as one of Copley's pictures, he dressed with elegance, he sang, he played the flute and guitar, and talked as well as he did everything else. He had not been with us long when he made love to me in most romantic fashion, and I—fool that I was—believed his honeyed words. When he went back to England, I wore a ring on my finger that was set with a real diamond—I was his betrothed wife!"

She stopped, but Heathcote made no answer, and she resumed:

"He had promised to return for me, but he came not! O! what I suffered as month after month dragged by; how heavy my poor heart was with hope deferred. When my father returned again, I inquired for my lover, and learned that he was married to a noble English girl. That disappointment embittered my whole life; I married Robert Pitcher, a poor, yet honest fisherman, and began to ply my calling as a fortune-teller. But I did not forget—I resolved some day to have my revenge. At length you came to my house—I knew the Heathcote cast of features, the deceitful blue eye, the brown hair and beard. Like father, like son, in body and in soul. You sought my advice, and I tossed your heart about as best suited my purposes! You are foiled, and you now understand why Moll Pitcher has worked you naught but evil! When you are dead, I shall send Sir Ralph a letter which will tell him how my wrongs have been avenged! Farewell—I hear the turnkey; at last you are reaping your reward!"

The next instant the massive door swung open, and the jailer appeared. Moll followed him from the cell, the great key turned in the rusty lock, and Heathcote was alone with conscience.

The morning after the sibyl's visit, Ralph Heathcote was found in the worst stages of brain fever, and in a week's time slept in a nameless grave.

The night of the 2nd of October, Captain Ward received a letter sealed with black wax, the device being a vulture clutching a serpent in its talons. He unfolded it, and read as follows:

"Laurence Ward—I cannot die till I once more reiterate my hatred of you and your race; till I tell you who has been the evil genius of your destiny. When you resided in England, and before you had bought a commission in the English Navy, you were, as you will recollect, a county squire. Two lads were arrested, and brought to trial for poaching. You sentenced us to receive forty lashes at the whipping-post! While our blood boiled with fury, we were escorted to the public square by a band, playing the 'Rogue's March,' and there lashed most cruelly amid the shouts and jeers of the rabble, who had assembled to witness the scene. Stung to madness, I wrested myself from the man who was flogging me, and was beginning to beat him, when you, who sat near in your saddle, bade the officers seize me. I again passed through a farce of a trial, and was doomed to six months' imprisonment. When I came out, I felt as if my hand were against every man, and every man's hand against me! I hated you—I hated the world! In this mood I wandered away, and at length found employment in a manufacturing town, where I partially forgot my shame in a new passion. I learned to love Mary Grey, the daughter of a respectable tradesman, and was high in her favor, when you, chancing to be on a visit to a gentleman in the neighborhood, met her, who had grown so dear to me. Attracted by her beauty, you paid her the most assiduous attentions, and, dazzled by the prospect of being your bride, she began to look with scorn upon me. Then I abducted her, and swore that it should be the chief object of my life to avenge my wrongs. Soon afterward I came across the young man who had been lashed with me at the whipping-post, and we leagued ourselves together in a revengeful brotherhood! Thrice, when you were paying court to noble ladies, we poisoned their minds so that they turned from you in scorn. Two of your vessels were burned by us while in foreign harbors, and their rich cargoes destroyed; and at last we drew into our confederacy your nephew, Ralph Heathcote, that we might have him wholly in our power, and make him as thorough a desperado as ourselves! I need not write more; had we succeeded in our last plot, Grace Ward's gold and your's also, would have been in our possession. Time had changed the beardless boys you sentenced to the lash to stout men, and you did not know us when we came to Lynn! Ha! ha! ha! how we chuckled over our schemes—even now a savage laugh echoes through my cell as I write! Hark ye, old man—though I am to die to-morrow, if it is possible, I will haunt you to your latest day, and thus you will have good reason to remember, not Gervayse Gault, for that is an alias, but him who, living or dying, is your foe,

Giles Græme."

With a thousand contending emotions, Captain Ward perused the above, and as he sat musing on its contents, he muttered:

"They deserved their lashing; but Mary, Mary Grey, my conscience isn't quite clear about her! Thus it is that the thoughtless acts of early manhood are avenged!"

At this moment he heard light steps in the hall, and looking round, perceived Grace and her mother. That was their first call since the memorable scene in the breakfast-room, and it was with some embarrassment he advanced to meet them. He clasped a hand of each, and exclaimed:

"Forgive me, forgive me!"

"I do forgive, dear, dear uncle!"

"And I too."

"You hinted something, sister Camille; did you then know aught to Ralph's disadvantage?"

"Moll Pitcher had hinted that he might have had a hand in the murder. But how is Mabel?"

"Very feeble; the trial was a great shock to her!"

"And do you admit visitors?"

"No, we are forbidden to; but it seems to me, Camille, as if you would do her good! Go up to her room, and try to comfort her."

Madame Ward ascended the stairs, and glided into the hitherto mysterious chamber. There lay Mabel, pale, thin, despondent.

"My child," she murmured, "how are you?"

"O, Aunt Camille, I am very wretched!" and the invalid burst into tears; "my hopes are wrecked," she sobbed "I am dying of a broken heart!"

"List," said Madam Ward; "I too have trod the fiery furnace;" and she went on to tell her niece how much she yet had to live for.

Mabel hearkened in silent attention, and from that hour began to gain strength with a rapidity which astonished all who knew her.

CHAPTER XIV.

When we have hoped, sought, striven, lost our aim,
Then the truth fronts us, beaming out of darkness,
Like a white brow thro' its o'ershadowing hair.
BAILEY.

Two weeks after the execution of the two desperadoes, who have figured in our story, young Captain Crofton returned from a cruise with three prizes. As soon as possible he hastened to the old Wetherell Place; he had scarcely inquired if Miss Ward were at home, when a lithe form came flying toward him, a pair of white arms encircled his neck, and Grace murmured:

"O, Richard, Richard, what a pleasant surprise this is!"

The young man held her to his breast for a moment, and then Grace drew him into the parlor. There sat Captain Ward and his brother's widow. The fair matron warmly welcomed him, but it was with a confused air that the old gentleman greeted him. The four sank into their seats, but a constraint pervaded the circle; Captain Ward tapped the carpet nervously with his cane, trifled with the seals of his watch-guard, and ever and anon bit his lip till the blood seemed ready to flow. At length he moved to the gallant Crofton, and said:

"I owe you an apology for my previous rudeness. I was deceived—I now see how vastly superior you are to that whited sepulchre they called Ralph Heathcote. I, as well as Grace and her mother, approve your suit. Can you pardon me?"

"With all my heart, sir!" and the speaker held out his hand.

The old man grasped it, laid the girl's hand in it, and with a significant smile, resumed:

"I must leave you now, and I suppose you won't care; but I shall hope to have your company at dinner to-morrow."

The lovers accepted the invitation, and he bowed himself out, followed by Madam Ward. Then Richard Crofton heard of all that had passed in his absence, and they thanked God with renewed fervor that they were free from the persecutions of Heathcote and his confederates. He pleaded that Grace would become his wife before he again went to sea, and he did not plead in vain. The girl could not hesitate, when her life's sweetest dream was about to be realized, and Madam Ward declared that in those troublous times, her child needed the protection which only a husband can give. The last day of October was fixed for the wedding, and the arrangements immediately commenced.

On her bridal morn Grace Ward awoke early, and cast an eager glance from her window. It was one of those mild, balmy days, which the year gives us, when the pomp of her bloom and verdure have passed away. The soft, brooding, autumnal haze, the sky, fair and tranquil as our dreams of Eden-land, the rustle of the dry leaves, the occasional dropping of a brown nut, or red-cheeked apple, the breezy whisper abroad, all combined to make the wedding-day glorious. As the morning wore on, the hitherto quiet old mansion was all astir with festal excitement. Chaises and chariots rolled along the broad avenue, leading across the lawn, and deposited their freight of beauty, rank, and fashion, while epauletted soldiers and stately civilians dashed up to the door on horseback. Without, the black grooms were busy as bees; within there was the rustle of rich robes, the tread of many feet, the breath of foreign perfumes, the waving of ostrich feathers, the glitter of jewels, the hum of conversation, and ever and anon a silvery peal of laughter. Meanwhile Grace stood in her dressing-chamber, surrounded by a flock of bridemaids, and with her own quadroon waiting-woman arraying her young mistress for her bridal. The toilet-table was strewn with jewelled caskets, glove boxes, flowers, ribbons and lace, and on a chair lay the dressing-gown of pale, rose-colored silk, which had just been cast aside. Suddenly a warm blush surged over the face of the young bride elect.

"Richard has come," she murmured, "I hear his step in the corridor."

The next moment there was a tap at the door, and she sprang to open it. In another instant a deep, musical voice asked:

"May I come in?"

"O! yes, Richard—we are all quite ready!"

The bridemaids dropped a courtesy, and the waiting-woman pointing to her mistress, exclaimed:

"Now massa Crofton, did you eber see anyting so beautiful as that dress and vail?"

"Yes, the wearer is far more beautiful."

Again Grace blushed, but she asked with a spice of maidenly vanity,

"Do you like my costume, Richard?"

"Like it? It is perfectly exquisite—you look fit for a royal bride."

His compliment was deserved, for nothing could have been richer, or more tasteful than the robe of white brocade, damasked with silver flowers, and trailing as she moved, a skirt of peach-blossom satin, stiff with embroidery, the full, flowing vail of real point lace, the artificial wreath of orange-flowers, starred here and there with diamonds of the first water, the diamond necklace, ear-drops and bracelets, the delicate pearl-broidered gloves and slippers, clasped with brilliants, and the jewelled bouquet-holder, in which gleamed the snowy bloom of the bridal bouquet. When Grace had been admired sufficiently to have suited the most exacting nature, she, with girlish pride, alluded to the elegance of Crofton's wedding suit—a surcoat of amber-colored velvet, a white brocade waistcoat, lace trimmed linen, rich small-clothes, and silk stockings, with jewelled brooch, knee and shoe-buckles.

"There is a story connected with my costume," he said after a slight hesitation; "I am, as you all know, a poor man, and besides, my country is too poor for me to spend too much on a single suit. But three days ago, as I was riding through Lynn on my way home from Cambridge, Geoffrey King, an eccentric old man, came out, and begged me to go into his house.

"'Young Crofton,' he said, 'I hear you are going to be married.' 'Yes I am.' 'And is the lady of your choice Captain Ward's niece?' I answered in the affirmative, and he continued, 'She is a great heiress, but they tell me you stoutly refused to share her fortune—that you have resolved to work your way in the world as if she hadn't a farthing.' Of course I couldn't deny it, and he then inquired if I had refused to take more than a sailor's wages from the proceeds of my privateering. On learning that he had not been misinformed, with regard to this, he said he was glad to find one disinterested person, and added that I should not suffer by it. He proposed to give me a wedding suit worthy the occasion, and went with me to a Salem tailor. Not satisfied with attiring me in a garb far beyond my means, he insisted on sending my father, mother and sister money to purchase wedding garments, and when I sat down to breakfast this morning, I found in my plate papers duly signed and attested, conveying to me the sum of ten thousand pounds."

Grace lifted her handkerchief to wipe away tears of joy, and murmured—

"There, there, Richard, you wouldn't have any of my wealth, nor receive but a pittance from your country, but God has made you a rich man in spite of yourself!"

Crofton smiled, and rejoined—

"It is eleven, dearest—we must go down—Cassie, call the groomsmen!"

The servant obeyed, and the six groomsmen entered and selected their partners, who were resplendent in satin, brocade, and artificial flowers. A few moments later the bridal party swept into the grand drawing-room, and the solemn rites commenced, Captain Ward giving the bride away. The ceremony over, Richard turned toward Grace, and as he pressed his lips to hers, murmured—

"My bride—my wife!"

Then Madam Ward moved forward, with white-robed, golden-haired Alice leaning on her arm, and amid tears of joy their congratulations were breathed. The next pair who advanced to the newly wedded ones were old Hugh Crofton and his invalid wife, who looked very lady-like in her silk dress and lace cap.

"My father—my mother!" exclaimed Grace, as she gave them a warm welcome.

"God bless you, my children!" exclaimed the old man, fervently; "God grant that the young bride may never regret her marriage with the son of a Swampscot fisherman!"

They retired, and other guests came thronging around, and more than one asserted that Richard and Grace Crofton were the handsomest pair, and theirs the most brilliant wedding they had ever seen. The crew of the Petrel were present in a picturesque uniform, with their wives and sweethearts in gala dress. Last, though by no means least in the opinion of many, Robert Pitcher and Moll. The sibyl's lithe figure was set off to advantage by her own wedding silk, and her dark hair fastened up with silver arrows. As she approached, Mr. and Mrs. Crofton greeted her with extreme cordiality, and again thanked her for befriending them in the hour of need. They did not know that any selfish motive had prompted her course toward Heathcote, and felt deeply grateful. She wished them joy in the most approved fashion, and then playfully declared that it was not impossible Grace might take to fortune-telling, as she had succeeded very well when, disguised in Moll's clothing, she had practiced palmistry at the door of the Golden Key. In fact, "all went merrily as a marriage bell," and at the banquet which ensued, which was the wonder of the colony for many a day, the bride and bridegroom were toasted by the noblest soldiers of the Patriot army.

The wedding tour of Mr. and Mrs. Crofton was a trip to Swampscot, where, in the humble fisherman's cottage, they spent their honeymoon. They then sailed for Savannah in the Petrel, Madam Ward and Alice accompanying them. Grace and her mother had a residence in town, but both were anxious to visit their plantation. On, on, on wound their carriage amid evergreen trees, draped with moss or bright with scarlet berries, till they reached a great, roomy mansion, with latticed verandahs, long, low French windows, and quaint gables, wreathed with evergreen vines. The grounds were beautifully laid out, and Alice felt like one in a dream, as she was borne through a garden to which urns, rustic chairs, and marble fountains and statuary lent a fairy-like aspect, even in winter. Servants with gay turbans flocked to welcome them, and within, the house was like a palace. But Crofton could not linger amid these scenes; the next day he was again at sea, and during the war of the Revolution, no man served his country more faithfully than he.

Soon after the marriage of Richard Crofton and Grace, Hortense L'Estrange disappeared. Moll had told the young captain, in his wife's presence, of the beautiful Creole's mad love for him, and how she had talked of his trampling her heart under his feet.

"I will tell you how it was," said he: "When I was second mate of the 'Sea Bird,' she and her father were passengers. She had just recovered from a severe illness, and her parents had thought the sea air might benefit her. I treated her kindly, but nothing more, and was astonished when her father asked what my intentions were. I assured him that I had never in word or deed given the least reason for anybody to think me her lover. He declared she had fallen desperately in love with me, and would die of a broken heart unless I married her, adding, that many in his circumstances might look higher, but as for him, he would only consult his daughter's happiness. I firmly declined his proposal, and the subject was dismissed, but ere we landed I saw she had grown bitter and sullen."

Such was the explanation to which Grace and Moll listened, and both believed it.

A year later Mr. and Mrs. Crofton received an invitation to witness the ceremony of taking the vail at a Southern convent. They resolved to accept it, and at the appointed hour entered the chapel. Outside the wind moaned sadly, as a pining spirit; the sky was flecked with gray clouds, and the waters of the river beat against their "blossom-haunted" borders like the wild passion-waves of a stormy heart. But within the chapel of the Gray Nuns all was brilliant and imposing. The hoarded riches of the convent were lavishly displayed. Costly votive offerings lighted up every shrine with a blaze of splendor; the font was of Carrara marble, ornamented with brooding doves; the lamps burning before the sacred images, and the candelabra which supported the tall wax tapers, were of massive silver, while silver chalices and censers glittered around the altar. In that hallowed place stood the bishop, with his gilded crosier uplifted, and his gorgeous vestments sweeping in heavy waves to the pavement. Suddenly a strain of music, so sweet and soft that it seemed like some far-off angel-song, stole through the edifice, and a band of chanting nuns came gliding in. As their ranks parted, all turned to one in their midst—it was Hortense L'Estrange. There was a hectic glow on her dusk cheek, an unnatural glitter in her dark eyes, and never had she appeared half so beautiful. A tunic of rare lace, worn over a dress of silk damask, fell in graceful folds about her tall figure, and was looped with clusters of brilliants. Jewels of untold value clasped her arms, rose and fell above her wildly throbbing heart, and starred the night of her tresses, while over all swept a vail which Victoria might have been proud to wear at her bridal. She knelt at the altar; prayers, responses and chants followed. With tones that never faltered she pronounced her vows, with a steady hand signed the written profession of her faith. Then her long, dark tresses were shorn, the sacred ring placed upon her finger, and the nun's vail flung over her like a funeral pall. The solemn benediction was breathed, and in a few moments more a pæan, which shook the convent to its foundation, told that Hortense L'Estrange was a gray nun, or, in Catholic parlance, the Bride of Heaven.

Immediately after the arrest of his confederates, Antoine Lafarge fled, and was never again seen in New England.

Moll Pitcher lived and died at High Rock, and to this day her weather-beaten old house is an object around which weird memories gather.

When Gault was executed, a small package was found in his pocket. On opening it they discovered a few papers, among which was the marriage certificate of Mabel Ward and Ralph Heathcote; the bridegroom having directed the priest to register his real, and not his assumed name on the document, that might yet be the means of establishing the claim to her father's wealth. It was carried to the poor widow, and laid aside among mementoes of a love which had proved the bane of her life. There is an Indian summer of the year, when balmy breezes blow, and the sunrise, moon-rise and star-beams recall the days and nights of June. There is an Indian summer of the heart, when hopes we thought blighted forever awake to bloom and beauty, when the pulse bounds with something of its youthful vigor, and God's peace distils like twilight dews. This Indian summer influence Mabel Ward felt, and she was not only the support and comfort of her parents' old age, but an angel of mercy in the homes of the poor and the afflicted.

"Lame Alice" never married, but through her whole life she was an "embodied peace."

Captain Crofton and Grace spent their winters at the South, their summers at Lynn and Swampscot. In the war of 1812, he enlisted as a Naval officer, and won the applause of his countrymen by his prowess. Children grew up in their home, and they lived to a "green old age," when both waited, not without hope of a reunion in the better land, for the angel who should "loose the silver cord" and "shatter the golden bowl;" but in the midst of their happiness they sometimes wept, as they recalled the tragic fate of the Hunted Felon.

THE END.

LOVERS' WALKS.

Ah, once I liked not lovers' walks—
Nor wanderings by the hill—
When star to star at midnight talks,
And all the world is still!
I laughed at all romantic souls
That half in rapture stood;—
I hated strolls—those moonlight strolls—
And always thought I should!

I vowed by all the world e'er knew
Of beautiful and bright,
No love on earth should tempt me to
A rambling walk by night!
But, ah—one's mind can little guess
To what one's heart is born:
Who'd thought a month—or even less—
Had found me so foresworn!

But when I loved not star—nor moon—
Nor wanderings through the glen—
My song of life was out of tune,
I knew not Mary then!—
Now I would rather roam 'till light
Bloom'd o'er the morn's sweet breast;
Than ever breathe those words "Good Night!"
Or ever think of rest!

THE HEIRESS DISENCHANTED.

BY AMY RANDOLPH.

It was a magnificent apartment. No epicure in voluptuous life, even were his senses schooled in every conceivable stage of human luxury, could have desired a pleasanter casket wherin to lounge away his spoiled being. The sea-green walls, upheld by cornices carved to imitate shells, and sprays of snowy coral, suggested the idea of some cool, delicious, ocean cave, where the plash of great waves marked the flying minutes of the sultry July day. Here and there gleamed a small, rare cabinet picture or a figure in alabaster, and in the deep bay windows, half-hidden by heavy draperies of emerald damask, stood tables of veined mosaic, covered with books and costly ornaments—indices of the expensive tastes of the occupant of this luxurious room.

Mr. Fitzroy Castleton lay reclined on an elegant little sofa, in an attitude at once graceful and easy. He never allowed himself to relax into awkwardness, even in the seclusion of his own room—*practice* is an excellent thing. A half-smoked cigar—no coarse or common weed, but one of the most fragrant tubes of leaf that ever came from the isles beyond the sea, was scientifically poised between the second and third fingers of his left hand, and a heavily embroidered velvet smoking-cap, tasseled and fringed, *a la Turque*, with gold, covered his profusion of wavy, jet black curls.

He was certainly very handsome—any feminine judge would at once have pronounced him "a perfect Apollo," yet there was a something in his *tout-ensemble* that would have prompted a gentleman to mutter "conceited puppy!" on encountering him, of a sudden. His features were of the straight, Grecian mould, and his lips exquisitely modelled. The eyes, of a dark, violet gray, large and liquid, seldom looked you fairly and squarely in the face, but were generally half-veiled beneath a wall of long, soft eyelashes—Mr. Castleton knew that those eyelashes were perfectly irresistible—and his moustache was the very perfection of hirsute art, soft, silken, and glossy, curling over his lip, with a wavy grace, which nearly drove the Broadway dandies distracted with envy as they strove in vain to plaster their wiry horns of rebellious hair into something like its undulating curves. Nobody ever knew the time and pains that Mr. Castleton bestowed on his beloved moustache!

As he lay there lazily, conscious that his *pose* could not be improved upon, it was evident that some pleasant vision had taken possession of the citadel of his mind, from the occasional smile that flitted across his face.

"Wouldn't it be glorious?" he soliloquized, almost as though he were thinking aloud. "I'll never call these long years of unsuccessful endeavors wasted, if, at the end, I succeed in winning such a golden prize as Nina Aubin! It makes my head dizzy even to think of it—it's like a dream! Yet no—it is, indeed, glorious reality; for last night, in the odorous gloom of that thrice-blessed conservatory, I boldly put the question, and she, with the prettiest blushes that ever—well, that isn't to the point—suffice it that I, Fitzroy Castleton, have won the beautiful heiress to more thousands than I can think of, without an ecstatic throb of that anatomical hollow where physiologists say the heart is! Heart—fiddlestick; there's no such thing; it's all brain! But I flatter myself that my part of the business was done remarkably well. I'd like to see any fellow go down on his knees in more graceful style than I did last night."

And, catching a glimpse of himself in an opposite mirror, Mr. Castleton gave his shirt collar a little twitch, and proceeded:

"Just to see how wrathful all my Nina's disappointed danglers will be! That donkey Carleton—he'll be fit to hang himself! Well, I think Nina has showed superb taste in her selection of a husband, and I must be excruciatingly polite for awhile, I suppose, for the little spoiled beauty thinks it's *her* I'm in love with; whereas, *entre nous*, my dear cigar, it's her gold. If she were a yellow-faced hag of sixty, I'd marry her just the same. After we're married, however, I'll soon settle that matter. She may go to France then, for all I care, so long as I have the handling of her bank-book! That reminds me—I must send her a little bijou of a betrothal ring—pearls, I suppose, with some sort of a sentimental motto. That will be difficult to manage, though, for my credit's getting deused low. I can't play the confidence game much longer; yet I think Gold & Co. will trust me, if I just whisper a word or two about my expectations. I'll make the experiment, at all events!"

At this stage of matters, Mr. Castleton tossed his cigar out of the window, and took up a tiny tray of cards and notes, which had all this time been standing unheeded at his elbow, so rapt was he in Elysian dreams. Some were perfumed *billets-doux*, some cards of invitation, and some—his face grew very black over these—were threatening bills, and dunning letters from indignant tradesmen.

"This confounded tailor's bill, again!" growled Mr. Castleton, savagely. "He'll put in an execution, he says. *Will* he? May he find something worth his trouble—there's nothing here belonging to me, I'm very sure! That scamp of a bootmaker! 'Long account'—'heavy amount'—'wife and children.' Why are such plebeian wretches allowed to bother their betters?"

And Fitzroy fiercely tore the pitiful note into tatters. At this instant a knock was heard at the door.

"Who's there?" cried Fitzroy, pettishly.

"It's only me, sir," said one of the servants of the hotel. "There's a woman here insists on speaking to you, sir!"

"A woman?"

"Yes, sir—she won't take 'no' for an answer. I told her you were engaged, but she says she won't detain you a minute."

"Who can it be?" mused the self-worshipper. "Well, show her in, Jenkins!"

The next moment a poor, thin, shadowy creature glided in, clad in miserably darned and insufficient garments, and displaying on every feature of her wan face the ghastly stamp of poverty and illness. A dark expression of anger shot over Mr. Castleton's brow, as he recognized her.

"What are you here for again, woman?" he exclaimed. "I can't attend to your paltry affairs!"

"Mr. Castleton," she said, earnestly, "I implore of you to settle this bill. It is the fourth time I have called about it. I worked six weeks for you, embroidering and making up linen, and at your request selected and purchased the materials myself, when I could ill afford to advance the money. Mr. Castleton, is it right to defraud the poor of their hard-earned support?"

It was a part of Mr. Castleton's profession, but the poor widow did not know that.

"Leave the room, you audacious beggar!" he sternly exclaimed.

"I am starving—my babes are crying for bread! O, for the love of all that is human, pay me but a trifle of what you owe me!"

"There is no proof that I owe you a cent," he returned, with a sneering laugh; "you cannot legally recover a farthing. Go, I say, and be thankful that I do not give you in charge to the police for attempting to extort money under false pretences!"

She turned very pale, but faltered out—

"O, sir, you would not be unjust to the widowed and the fatherless?"

He sprang to his feet with a fierce execration, and she, terrified and trembling, tottered from the room.

"There, that matter is disposed of," he muttered, with a sigh of relief. "And now for little Nina's ring."

The afternoon sun of that self-same day came peeping cheerily into the gorgeous boudoir where sat beautiful little Nina Aubin, the orphan belle and heiress, arranging the golden masses of her lovely hair, while her only living guardian, an aunt, sat by, watching her, with a loving yet slightly anxious eye.

"Yes," said Nina, gaily, "my fate is decreed now, dear aunt. The little bird is caught!"

"Well," was the somewhat grave reply, "I can only pray for your happiness, my sweet child. But I must own that I dislike this Castleton."

"You are so prejudiced, darling aunty!" said Nina, throwing her arms round her aunt's neck. "You never had a favorable eye for any one who came to woo your little Nina away from you!"

"But for this one, least of all. Nina, I fear he is treacherous. There surely is deceit and double dealing hidden under the silky softness of his look and manner."

"You are mistaken. I cannot hear you speak thus, aunt," said Nina, the ruby blood mantling in her velvet cheek. "He is the soul of chivalry and honor, else had *I* never loved him!"

"May you find it so, darling. Meanwhile, pray delay the marriage. Next month is far too soon."

"But he wishes it, aunt, and I am willing to trust my future entirely in his hands!"

Mrs. Montague looked with a sigh at her loving, beautiful, pure-hearted niece, and had not courage to breathe a word of dissent.

The door opened softly—it was Nina's maid.

"Miss Nina, the poor woman is here that I thought could help about the trousseau."

"Tell her to come in, Clara, immediately."

And the same poor creature whom, a few hours since, Mr. Castleton had spurned from his elegant rooms, came feebly in, only too glad, through the maid's recommendation, to obtain a prospect of work. She was very pale and wan, and, exhausted by her long walk, sank, panting, into a chair.

"You are tired—you are ill!" exclaimed the affectionate little Nina, whose loving heart could not behold unmoved the slightest pang in a fellow-being, and with quick impulse she poured out a glass of wine, and held it to the lips of the woman. The touch of the inspiring liquid seemed to give new life—the woman sat up, with a grateful smile.

"Pardon my weakness," she said—"I am nearly starving, and my little ones at home are crying for bread."

"Can this be possible!" cried Nina, "and I revelling in wealth and luxury! Tell me how this happens."

And with tears and sobs the poor creature told her sorrowful story, interrupted by the sympathetic exclamations of Nina. Last of all came the sad recital of how she had been defrauded by a fashionable gentleman, and how he had that morning driven her from his door with coarse threats and imprecations.

"Shameful! shameful!" exclaimed Miss Aubin. "Can it be that such contemptible wretches are allowed to walk the face of the earth?"

"My dear," said her aunt, "such fashionable impostors, unfortunately, are but too common."

"If *I* knew of any," exclaimed Nina, "they should be driven from my society—they are not worthy the name of men!"

"Yes," said the woman, simply, "it is very hard on poor people that have to work for their daily bread. I would not have thought it of Mr. Castleton, for he is a grand gentleman, and folks say he is going to marry a great heiress."

"Mr. Castleton?" Nina turned ashy pale.

Her aunt sprang towards her.

"Nina, my darling, you are ill!"

"No, no, it was but a spasm. Remain here a while until I return," stammered Nina to the seamstress, and then hurried away, leaning on her aunt's arm.

For a long time Nina sat in silence, the tears slowly dropping from her eyes. Alas! it was hard to abandon the pleasant vision—to put away the debased idol.

"Dear aunt," she murmured, after a while, "I feel as though I were waking from a delicious dream—and the waking is worse than death. Yet I must not falter. Will you please send for Mr. Castleton, to call here immediately?"

"My darling, what are you about to do?"

"Dearest aunt, indulge me this once," and Nina laid her pale cheek tenderly against her aunt's hand. Mrs. Montague caressed the fair head, and complied without a word of comment.

"So!" quoth Mr. Fitzroy Castleton, "my Nina can't exist without me one single day! A good sign for me. Well, I believe I must indulge the little puss!"

And Mr. Castleton arranged his fine hair, stroked his moustache, and, with the tiny casket of velvet and satin in his pocket, set out for Miss Aubin's residence.

He was shown into the parlor, where Nina sat by the window, quietly awaiting him. In the deep shadow, at the other end of the apartment sat another female; but the pre-occupied suitor did not even notice this. With his most graceful mien he glided forward, and bent to kiss the lily hand of the heiress.

"My sweetest Nina, I have obeyed your summons!"

She withdrew her hand quietly. This movement somewhat startled him, but he proceeded:

"First of all, may I place the betrothal ring on your finger, dear Nina? It is of pearls and gold, selected with special reference to your pure and classic taste." And he drew the casket from his pocket as he spoke.

"Before you waste money on trifles like this," she replied, coldly, "you must recognize the claims of justice. There is another who has a better right to your money than I."

"Another?" stammered Fitzroy, turning red.

Nina beckoned to the woman, and in another moment, the accomplished knave was confronted with the victim of his dishonesty.

"Pay that woman what you owe her," said Nina, quietly, yet firmly.

"I—I have not—I am not prepared," muttered the confounded exquisite.

"Then give her the ring, it will cover the amount due, and I will take care that the jewel is converted into money."

"But——"

"Give her the ring instantly!"

Quailing before the stern dignity of the heiress, the mortified dandy laid the costly ring in the seamstress's thin hand.

"And now, sir," said Nina, "I have only to bid you farewell, and to desire that you never enter my presence more. I thank Heaven for the narrow escape I have had from your wiles and treachery, and that I have discovered your true character ere it was too late. Good evening, sir!"

Castleton knew that his game had been played out. Nina's voice and manner left him no room for hope, and, with bitter mortification and impotent rage in his fierce heart, he crept, like a wounded snake, from the apartment.

"That my plans should have been frustrated by that wretched seamstress!" he gasped, between his white lips, as he hurried homeward. "I was a fool to trust to a woman's caprice!"

The next steamer that sailed for Europe, had the honor of bearing away from his native shores Mr. Fitzroy Castleton, eyelashes, moustaches, straight-nose, and all; and great was the outcry among his multitudinous creditors when they discovered that their bird had flown.

Whether the luckless jeweler ever got paid for the exquisite betrothal ring—price $50—is remarkrbly uncertain. We are rather inclined to think, however, that he is still expecting Mr. Castleton to "call and settle the small bill!"

BIBLE TEXTS ON INJUSTICE.

He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker.

He that oppresseth the poor to increase his riches, and he that giveth to the rich shall surely come to want.

I will be a swift witness against those that oppress the hireling in his wages.

Deal justly. Whatsoever you would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them. Honor all men.

What mean ye that ye grind the faces of the poor?

An inheritance may be gotten hastily at the beginning; but the end thereof shall not be blessed.

He that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at the end shall be a fool.

He that by unjust gain increaseth his substance shall gather it for him that will pity the poor.

Woe unto him that increaseth that which is not his.

Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness. Ye shall not oppress one another.

He that honoreth God hath mercy on the poor.

Wrong not the poor because he is poor. Oppress not the afflicted—for the Lord will plead their cause and spoil those that spoil them.

The Lord executeth righteousness and judgment for *all* that are oppressed.

Envy not *thou* the oppressor, and *choose none of his ways.*

There is no respect of persons with God.

He will judge the world in righteousness.

He will be a refuge for the oppressed.

He remembereth them; He forgeteth not the cry of the humble.

The Lord is known by the judgment he executeth; He judgeth the fatherless and the oppressed.

The needy shall not *always* be forgotten; the expectation of the poor shall not perish forever.

The Lord is governor among the nations; the wicked are His sword.

The Lord shall laugh at the oppressor, for he seeth that His day is coming.

The Lord hateth iniquity; the oppressor and the evil man He will judge.

The Lord hath made of one blood all the nations of the earth.

Oh! Lord, *our* Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth.

Thy kingdom *come.*

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THE most sensitive keenness of feeling may exist with the most thorough mastery of temper. The union is a rare one; nevertheless it is attainable by those who labor for it.

WHY SHOULD WE MOURN?

BY FINLEY JOHNSON.

Why should we mourn for those who sleep
Within the quiet tomb?
God only knows if they had lived
What would have been their doom;
Oh, better far spare all our tears
For those who go astray—
The dead within their quiet graves
Are happier far than they.

Why should we weep for her whose life
Was as the flowers pure?
An ocean of our tears would not
More bliss to her secure.
But mourn for those poor, fragile ones,
Who still dwell on the earth,
And pray that virtue's flower-fair
May in them spring to birth.

Oh, shed no tears upon the graves
Of those who die in age;
For they are happier far than we
Who still life's battles wage;
They sleep in peace, secure from woes,
Beneath the silent sod;
Their earth-freed spirits know no griefs,
Communing with their God.

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THE ONE ERROR.

A STORY FOR YOUNG WIVES.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A STRANGE CLAIMANT.

"Yes, it was *his* face. Oh! do you think I would not know it?" Nelly said, faintly, as she lay recovering from her swoon, and the subsequent weakness which had seized her, on her own poor bed at home, whither she had been conveyed by the hackney coach, which poor Tom's funds had willingly and instantly summoned to her aid, and by means of which they had all reached home much before Agnes, who waited up for them, had expected.

It was her turn now to aid her unhappy friend in her distress; and when Tom had been re-assured, for, poor lad, he had been in a terrible fright, and had taken his departure, and little Ida, having heard her mother's voice once more, had gone off into a deep sleep, the girl sat by the bed where the woman lay, utterly prostrated by the memory of the terrible vision that had sent the blood back to her heart like a summons from the dead.

"Yes, it was him," she faltered, "it must have been sent to warn me—oh! I had no business there—it was no place indeed for me, with such grief as mine, with such a fault to atone for—oh! it was a fearful warning—I shall never cease to see it, *never!*"

Her friend, in the possession of her clearer reason, attempted to reason with her; but Mrs. Franklen repulsed the arguments the other urged.

"My husband was *not* lost at sea," she said, shudderingly, "he was murdered—*murdered*, cruelly and by a horrible man; he *could* not have been saved, as you say; you don't know, Agnes, you don't know. Oh!" she moaned, "I shall never cease to see it, never."

But the younger woman full well knew the importance of at once dispersing, if possible, this phantom of the brain, as she believed it, ere it had taken too firm a hold upon the mind. She persevered.

"Did the face seem to look at you?" asked she; "do speak, dear, and tell me all; it will ease you, I am sure, and everything seems so much worse with brooding over. Was what you saw like a living, every-day man, and did he look at you?"

"No," said Nelly, fearfully, her voice sinking to a whisper, "no, its eyes were looking far above my head, up to the sky, its face was turned towards me, but it would not look at me. Oh, let me pray, Agnes, let me pray," and she slid trembling down upon her knees by the bedside; "I have not prayed enough, I had no business in that place, God forgive me!"

Then she poured out the fervent petition for forgiveness and strength to bear her punishment, which had become familiar to her lips, and the girl, with bent head and reverent ears, listened to the strange, urgent, passionate words, and from her heart responded.

Nelly arose more calm, but her nerves had received a terrible shock. Brooding as she did over the past so constantly, she had brought herself to look upon every fresh trouble or hardship as but a new addition to her deserved punishment, and in this sudden appearance of her lost husband her distorted imagination would see nothing but a warning to recall her to a sterner self-humiliation, a more absolute resignation to the consequences of her fault.

"I ought not to spare myself," she said, when they had sat some little time together; "I did not tell you all." And she related the whole of her history—from the first error of her maiden days to its fatal result—omitting only the finding of that ghastly witness; she could not bring herself to speak of what seemed ever a dread secret confided only to herself.

Agnes shook her head, and, though she would not again argue with her friend in her sorrow, within herself she recalled tales she had heard of men who had been drowned at sea, at least, given up for such by mourning relatives, yet had, in course of years, appeared again.

Something of this she had, at first, put forth as consolation for her friend, when she only knew her story partially; but, when Nelly had finished telling it all, she grasped the arm of the girl.

"He is dead," she said, in a constrained and painful voice; "*he* knew it was so, don't you see? else he dared not have asked me to be his wife."

The more work-a-day mind of Agnes Chaunce refused to entertain the notion of a ghost, close at the doors of a theatre, too; but the superstitious conviction of the other remained, and ever deepened with her lonely self-communings and the nursing of her morbid regrets.

It was well indeed for the little Ida that Tom Grejons, from that night henceforth transferring his attentions by the altitude of two flights of stairs, became by degrees the constant visitor of the third floor back, which Nelly and her child inhabited.

The memory of that night of happiness for the small dash of dismay her mother's illness had caused, was soon wiped from the child's memory—the sights, the sounds, the glory of that enchanted scene, ever to be connected in her mind with "good dear Tom," gave him that introduction to the child's heart which, in a nature like hers, would be by no means easily set aside; and the boy, on his part, was taken wonderfully with her.

Agnes and her father had come to live at a poor but decent lodging in an obscure street at Clerkenwell, and here, when a vacancy occurred, at her request, Nelly had also removed.

We have learned that Nelly had adopted the name of her first husband, on her arriving in London, no less fearful of discovery, than loathing the very sound of her real name; and even Agnes was unaware of her claim to any other.

Both still obtained work at the same establishment where they had first met. Poor enough indeed was that Nelly got as to pay; but, in addition, she also found occasional employment of a waistcoat-maker in the neighborhood, for whom the landlady of the house worked.

The poor mother spared not herself, but toiled, day and night, hard, and fared harder; fasted when her child dined, and, when she slept, rose many a time to work again, with a restless, eager longing, that work she must, even though, when that were finished, no more might be at hand. She had a certain aim—a feverish, urgent desire, that spurred her on. It was to get back the ring she had pledged—that ring she had placed on his finger, that she had so strangely recovered, and even to starvation point had held to so sacredly.

Poor woman! almost it might seem that her mind had been shaken by what she had passed through, such strange fancies beset her; for, though she made no mention of it to any one, she was not without a superstitious feeling, that to her having parted with that precious token, she owed the fearful visitation of her dead husband's appearance.

She became even more abstracted, more zealously devoted to her toilsome work, at which, indeed, she had become an adept; and even poor little Ida would have fared badly for companionship and proper exercise had not the new acquaintance fortunately appeared at this juncture.

The fact is, in spite of Tom's devotion to his first friends, he had been so constantly met by objections and resistance on the part of Agnes, her independence had so frequently galled him, even in the accepting of his services, that the transfer of his friendship was by no means the difficult matter it might otherwise have been.

But with little Ida it was the reverse. Here was one so much his junior as to look up to him, so destitute of amusement or companionship of any kind, that the very sound of his footstep was welcomed, and whose active little mind—free from gloomy recollections or anticipations of the future—was ever ready to receive his ideas or plans and make them her own. Even if she had not been the gentle, half-crippled, affectionate creature she was, little Ida would have made herself a place in the heart of the rough but high-souled lad. As it was, she grew upon his thoughts and mixed herself up with his plans to an extent that would have amazed himself, if he could have known it apart from himself.

He soon gained permission of Nelly for the freedom of her little home; there were times when she must leave her child alone to take home her work, and when bad weather, or some other accident prevented her going with her mother. Indeed, Nelly little liked that her child should mix with many of those she was obliged to meet at the manufactory, where she would be often detained a considerable time, and, at such intervals, the visits of the boy were indeed most welcome. The mother had soon confirmed, from her own experience, the favorable impression she had received from Agnes of Tom's character, and that though rough, and not of the most gentle-spoken in the world, she might safely trust her darling with him, and the lad availed himself to the full of her good will.

It may seem out of the common course of things that a boy like Tom should select such a disposal of his leisure hours; but we must bear in mind that he had never had at home the companionship of younger children; that he was, to a certain extent, *blasé* in all the ordinary pleasures of the London-boy youth, and had a wholesome contempt for the vicious portion of them; the charm of novelty went for much, and, withal, Tom had that hankering after the rule, the dominion, the guardianship, and tutelage of something wholly dependent upon him, which is innate with not the worst portion of the sex to whom self-esteem more especially appertains.

So Tom Grejons was missing in the long summer evenings from the sweet purlieus of the Close, and Pie Alley, and Smiffle Court, and the little room in the close, narrow street at Goswell road was brightened with the sunshine of his presence.

"I thought you *would* come," the childish voice would be heard to cry, in tones of delight, ere Tom had appeared in sight of the landing, where she stood waiting to receive him.

"I *knew* it was you," as his head came in view, and she, stooping down to press her pale face and long, dark curls through the hand-rails, greeted him with her low, quiet laugh.

"I am so glad—and I *have* swept the hearth, and set the chairs, and mother said you would stay till she came back—*eh?*" looking anxiously at her visitor.

"I should say so—only you're a goose to be afraid of the dark, if I didn't—why, what's the odds of the dark—it's all one?——"

Ida's countenance fell at this mention of her one dread aversion, the dark.

She pondered a minute, then, as Tom came up to the top stair; with her old caress, she stroked his face musingly—"Yes, but you're so *big*, you know."

Query, is not half the charm of woman's devotion to man contained in the involuntary homage of that little sentence?

The protecting air with which lordly Tom took the hand of his pet companion, and led her into the poorly furnished room, which, as the little girl said, she had been doing her best to "tidy"—for she possessed a love of order and neatness that needed no setting to work, and it was very touching to see her, with her one hand, busying herself in imitation of her elders, and achieving wonderful success, too, by dint of perseverance.

"It's jolly being up a-top, aint it?" says Tom, "'cause we can leave the door open, nobody comes up—and it's precious hot this evening. There!"

"Oh, Tom!"

The exclamation is consequent upon the visitor producing from his cap and the breast of his jacket certain glowing bunches of China roses and a pink or two, how obtained Tom best knows; but I fear boy notions of the vested right in growing flowers near the highway are about on a par with the rustic's on the game-laws, so we will not inquire too closely.

"Oh, Tom!" and the little creature's eyes glisten, and her pale cheek flushes, as she moves slowly round the treasures, her one hand poised, as if she almost feared to touch them.

"Well, what are you going to put 'em in? Look here, they want water, because they have been lying behind the gates in the yard since afore six this morning. My! wasn't it lovely out at five this morning? Don't I wish you had been——"

The one prohibition attached to Tom's intercourse with his little friend—he was never to take her into the street. The mother never would let her from the house, except by her own side.

"I don't know what to put them in, Tom. Mother will want the jug for milk."

Tom stared, the idea of such very limited resources had never been presented to him, but, like many a one before and since, he did not hesitate to have recourse to an old tie to oblige the new one.

Agnes had an old mug, he knew, and forthwith went to borrow it.

Agnes was in trouble. Her eyes were red, and it was with a slow footstep and a sad voice she answered him, but she at once granted his request, and with evident satisfaction.

She was glad that her pet found so good a companion; most gladly would she have taken charge of the child herself, but her father could not bear the sight of a child—it made him irritable.

The flowers disposed of, by Ida's desire, where she could see them when she went to bed, or awoke in the morning, the next surprise was produced.

A book—I believe, indeed, Tom's only especial property in that line—a translation of French fairy tales, beautifully illustrated, an attraction which the young companions equally delighted in, though, when these had been fully discussed, the desire became strong to know what some of them were about, and the boy volunteered to read one.

Half way he stopped.

"Look here, now," he said, sturdily, and slapping his leg, "it's stupid, after all, aint it, reading these things and seeming as if we believed 'em, when we know they're all lies. 'Robinson Crusoe's' best, I know a boy'll lend it me, and I shall bring it and read it—that's true, that is, every word. Besides, these here fairy tales make you wish it was true—ah! I say, if there was fairies, wouldn't I make this a rare place against your mother come home?"

Ida laughed. "How? do tell me," she said.

"Well, first, such curtains to that window, all red and gold——"

"Mother doesn't like red, though——"

"Well, then, green; and such a table, and chairs, and, oh! I say, Idy, wouldn't I have flowers? ah, I just would, in vases, all blue and gold, and serpents—like I seen at the gentleman's, where I went to take proofs, in the hall——"

"What's proofs?" asked the feminine tongue.

Here came an elaborate explanation from the masculine authority, which, if it did not leave the inquirer more enlightened, had at least the effect of impressing her with a profound sense of his capabilities.

"And *you* make books like these! oh, *how* clever—what a lot of money you must get!"

"Ah! I wish I did—but I shall, one of these days, Idy; for, when I'm a man, I'll have a business of my own, and, my eye, won't I have things a bit different, too——"

"I wish something, Tom," sighed the little one, who, since the flight into fairy land, had been thoughtful.

"What do you wish?" he asked, somewhat curiously.

"Oh! that I could do something to get money for to help mother; she is always working, always, and I can't do anything, only tidy the room, and when I ask her to let me help her, she says 'time enough by and by'—oh, I do wish, Tom."

The boy, as she spoke, had been looking down at her with some interest, and she, looking up, saw on what his eyes were fixed.

"I never can—can I?" the little creature asked, anxiously, and as if desperate for some competent decision.

"Is that *very* bad?" he asked, in a low voice, and indicating the sleeve, which, as in her baby growth, ever shrouded the one hand from sight.

The little girl shook her head, and drew back involuntarily. "It is *so* dreadful!" she said.

"You don't mind me seeing it?" Tom pleaded, and with a tone that said quite as much as words.

"You never will forget it," said the child, agitated and holding back; "you won't like to look at it, indeed, Tom."

But her companion reassured her, and, with that half reluctance which yet is swayed by the desire for possible sympathy in any affliction, she slowly, and, with Tom's help, untied the ribbon which confined the sleeve.

The good, rough boy suppressed the exclamation which rose to his lips, and involuntarily averted his eyes. It was but for a moment, for hers, with jealous inquiry, were fixed upon him.

He looked bravely, and as he did, the sight grew dimmed; then he tenderly drew over it the sleeve, and tied it as gently as the mother might have done.

"Does it hurt you ever?" he said.

"No," she said, "but isn't it dreadful—you can't bear it, eh?" she repeated, anxiously; "Tom, you can't bear it?"

"Poor Idy—poor little Idy!" the boy said, pityingly, and drew his arm around the shoulder of the afflicted child. But the impression seemed to pass away as they chatted on, and Tom, at Ida's request, sang the Bay of Biscay, and she, to his surprise and admiration, warbled, in her own sweet fashion, one of the airs she had caught at the theatre that night. Then it grew dusk, and the mother came home, and Tom went away.

Nelly was brighter that night than she had been for many a day. She had achieved the purpose so long looked forward to—had emancipated the pledged ring, and felt once more as if she had some hold upon the better portion of her life by this frail link.

She answered Ida's pretty chatter, and gave her opinion on a variety of subjects, chiefly relating to Tom, and books, and book-making, in a manner very satisfactory to the little one, till she prattled herself off to sleep, and the mother was left to her own thoughts, to her prayers, and to the sad luxury of revisiting those vigilantly hoarded relics of mystery, and of she scarcely knew what crime and horror.

As she laid the old-fashioned ring beside the skeleton hand of which it seemed almost to form a part, she vowed within herself that nothing should ever part them while she lived.

It might be some ten days after this, when sitting with her child beside her in the waning twilight, she was startled by a knocking at the door, and, almost ere she could answer, by bidding the visitor "come in," a man entered, apparently aged and slightly bent; by that uncertain light, he seemed cleanly but very poorly dressed, and his white hair somewhat profusely hung almost upon his shoulders from beneath the hat, which he removed, as he advanced into the room with hasty and somewhat uncertain steps.

"Pardon me, dear Mrs. Franklen," he began, "forgive me if I seem agitated; you are Mrs. Franklen?"

Nelly, in surprise, assented.

"I heard it—I was told so. Oh, dear, the surprise has almost taken away the little strength I have; oh, to find it at last, my long-lost treasure, my poor, poor boy, my ship-wrecked son!"

The old man put his ragged cuff to his eyes, and leaning upon his stick, for a few moments seemed unable to speak.

Amazed, and, indeed, almost alarmed by his manner and words, Nelly begged him to sit down, and waited till he had recovered, which in a few minutes he appeared to do, then he went on—

"So strangely it came to me, I hurried here at once—yet, oh, if it should not be true now, after all—you have a ring, ma'am, an ancient, massive gold ring——"

Nelly's heart sank, and for the moment she was unable to reply.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE BEST POLICY.

"I was but a boy," the venerable stranger continued, "when my dear father left my poor mother and myself, to go on that last voyage, which was, alas! destined to be fatal to both himself and her."

Here the old man, deeply affected, leaned forward, bowed his grey head till it rested upon his hands, which were clasped upon his stick.

"Yes," he went on, with a trembling voice, "a little child, as this might be, sweet innocent!"

He laid his hand on the curly head of little Ida, but she slipped from beneath it, and, drawing to her mother's side, stood viewing the stranger with infantine curiosity from afar off.

Little discomposed by the movement, the stranger went on:

"Young as I was, I remember well the tears which my dear mother shed, as she drew that ring from off her finger, and placed it on that of my father. 'You will keep it,' she said 'under Heaven's blessing, till you return it to me in the happy moment of our re-union. It will serve to remind you of me, and to recall those happy hours we have spent together.' He, lifting his hat from his noble brows—gallant seaman and pious Christian as he was—said, solemnly: 'Under God's mercy, Jessie, I will place it on your own precious finger this day twelvemonth.' Alas! madam, alas! for the instability of all human hopes." Here the stranger raised his eyes to the low ceiling of the attic, and slowly shook his head, till the grey hair was shaken out like a fringe upon it. "That day twelvemonth passed, and another, and yet another, and my beloved mother, though racked with the agony of suspense and fear, refused to put on mourning for her brave sailor, till the news, the fatal news, was brought, that beyond a doubt the vessel had been wrecked off our southern coasts, and that, so complete had been the wreck, so doubtful the portions from time to time deposited ashore, the certainty of the ship's identity with the missing one had but now been made clear. Vainly, then even, did my poor mother struggle against conviction; as vainly did she strive to obtain even the slightest token to assure her of the gloomy fact that she was a widow, and myself a wretched orphan. But she died, ma'am, she died." The old man seemed suddenly to become aware of the fact that he was growing prolix, and hurried to a conclusion. "Yes, ma'am, she died within a month; and her last words were of that ring. Ah! many and many a time have I thought upon my noble father and the pledge of her love both lying cold, cold at the bottom of the deep, but little did I imagine that ever these old eyes would behold it more."

"And you heard how I came to have it?" said Nelly, all amazed, and scarce knowing what she uttered.

Hurriedly, the old man resumed: "When I heard that upon that same coast, in that very year, among other relics whose description I remembered long ago, there had been found a ring so answering in particulars to the very one imprinted on my youthful mind, no less by my mother's frequent repetition than by that solemn occasion I have related; when I learned that it was in the possession of one who had herself been the wife of a seaman, who had dared the perils and known the hardships of that life, I said to myself, 'she will feel for the poor old man and his sorrows; she will let him look upon the old ring once more—once more——"

His voice had become quite plaintive, his hands shook as he extended them towards the woman, who was already wiping her eyes in sympathy, and had, in fact, begun, with a sigh, to extract the ring from its hiding-place.

The old man's eyes watched her with the fixed intentness of extreme old age, which takes, at times, almost the fixedness of insanity, and, in a rapid utterance, he went on:

"So well I remember—the great heavy plait of gold, that I used to think was the cable of my father's ship, and the great bloodstone, heart-shaped, with the tiny green anchor that seemed growing in the very midst, and——"

"Oh! I see *you* know it," she cried, with a sudden anguish in her tone, as it was borne in upon her soul that she must part with this long-treasured heirloom, that linked her to the lost one—so recently, too, recovered. She held it to him, and, in the faint evening light, the wonderful stones glowed with what seemed to be at that moment even an added brilliancy, and that, unseen to her, was reflected, even intensified, by those sharp eyes under the venerable locks that fringed the bare head of her visitant, as it stooped over the palsied hand which now held the ring.

"Once more! once more!" he cried. "It is indeed the very same! Oh, my dear mother! my brave and unfortunate father! And thus, in a stranger's hand—thus, after so many years of trial and of tribulation, do I behold your treasured ring!"

He stopped, and Nelly, standing beside him, saw something that glittered suddenly upon the ring, which the poor old man made as though he would wipe hastily away.

"Forgive me, ma'am; I'm old and weak—very weak. I haven't *many* years to live, and I bless Heaven that I have been permitted this sight before I die. I bless you, and thank you that have the instrument——"

He returned the ring into her hand as he spoke, with a sigh, and could Nelly but have seen the furtive glance of those sharp eyes as he did so! But she, poor woman, had but one thought: the ring had been hers so long as no more rightful owner claimed it; but here was one whose parents had possessed it at first, without whose loss it had never been hers.

No variety of courses opened to her.

"Nay," she said, sorrowfully, "it is yours. God knows I never thought to part with it, for it's been in our family so long that it seemed it must belong to me, and it's like next to losing my child; there's such a deal of my life that it calls to mind, though it's been trouble, too, for the most part, and it seems not me only, for you say it like brought yours no good. But anyway it belongs to you of right, and you must please take it, and if it's any comfort to you, why I'm glad you found me."

The ring was in the hand of the venerable stranger by this time, and the grey hairs quivering with emotion stronger than ever.

"Bless you! bless you, dear lady, for this!" he said, in a voice that quivered with emphasized gratitude. "But Heaven will bless you; the voice of your own conscience will bless you, when I am gone, when I am gone! I would not have taken the poor bauble from you, though my old heart yearned to it, I would not; but my days are numbered, and I have no friend, no child, no relative! When I am gone this ring shall be yours once more—yours and to this sweet innocent." He stretched out his hand, but the little golden head eluded him this time, and the old gentleman, putting his hand in his pocket, added the inducement of a piece of money.

"Take this, dear child; it is little I have to give, but you have made my heart very glad this night." As Ida made no approach despite the bribe, it was deposited on the table, for the stranger was now in no mood to stay, and was making his way towards the door as fast as the infirmities of age would allow.

"You will see me again," he said to Nelly; "you will let me come and see you, I know you will. Heaven bless you, dear lady, Heaven bless you!"

The door closed; the poor old man was heard making his way with difficulty down the stairs, and Nelly, for the moment, reproached herself with having suffered the loss of the ring to overcome her so far as not to have offered to assist the stranger in his descent.

She would have been possessed by a different impulse, perhaps, if she could have seen what were the movements of that aged person, after he had passed out of earshot of the attic occupants.

These were, lightly and quickly to descend the stairs in the dark passage at the foot, deftly to transfer the soft felt hat he had worn to his pocket, accompanied by the venerable fringe which had imparted unwonted dignity to that article of headgear, replacing it with a leather cap, which certainly better befitted the stubble crop it crowned. The stick, by a turn, slid into so small a compass it easily bore company with the hat and wig; the long brown coat which, to the stooping and ancient figure of the infirm man, was a loose and ample garment, became a tolerably fitting covering for the upright, well-knitted frame of the man who, in less time than you read of them, had effected these changes, then opened the door and as softly closed it, paused a moment to glance up and down the court, at that hour almost deserted.

His hand was in his deep side pocket, where it grasped something firmly, that short, thick club, on which, in its more slender form, the poor old man had leaned, when he entered the attic.

But no metamorphose of hat, or coat, or gray hair, could have effected greater change than had come of itself to that face with its thin compressed lips, its hard lines and prominent high cheek bones, only the keen gray eyes were the same, and the old man's had glittered more when he first set them on the ring. The light had died out of them now, as the man walked steadily but not too quickly out of the court and turned into a wide street, which he crossed into one narrower and dirty, thence plunging into a back slum, of intricate ways and increasing filth and obscurity, where his pace became rapid, and his lips more compressed, and the light fading out from his eyes yet more.

So he came to a street of wretched houses, where the unbroken darkness seemed a cover to hide the misery and dissoluteness of the place.

He pushed open a door and sprang up a broken staircase.

Half way up, a room-door stood half open, and he entered, then for the first time unclasping the hand that grasped the cudgel.

A woman, standing before the fire, turned round with an exclamation of surprise.

"La! Jimmy, is it you? I never heerd you for the frizzing; here's what you likes for supper, tripe and——"

The man with a bad word cursed the tripe, and while hastily divesting himself of his clothes and emptying the pockets, asked for gin, which she brought him, and he tossed off a couple of glasses.

"Now, then, I must be off—cut like winking! no, no, supper be hanged; you fool, you always want telling twice; you come after, too; sharp's the word. Here, take these things, send 'em after the last, they musn't be found at any price. Ay, give me the plastering blouse; that'll do."

"But, Jimmy, what is it?"

"*Con*found the woman! well, then," and he sank his voice a little, "I've got *the ring!*"

"You have! well there!" and the woman clasped her hands with a look of admiration at the hero of so doughty a deed. "And how *did* you, Jimmy Lowther, how on earth, when I'd thought you had forgotten all about the blessed thing?"

It may be presumed that gentlemen even of Jimmy Lowther's profession still retain so much of their sex's distinguishing weakness as to be not insensible to the flattery of a feminine tongue. Between hasty mouthfuls of victuals and gulps of gin the feat was related.

"It wasn't likely I was going to set upon it just the day after she took it out; why, it'd ha' come natural to the fool to remember all she'd told the fellow at the shop. I waited, of course, till she'd settled down a bit, and till there was nothing neither to keep me hereabout, for I must cut it. The woman's such a plain born fool, she'll not be for making a stir just at once, but if she lets on to any of the knowing ones about her, it will be blown on."

"I'd ha' give five pound now to ha' heerd you a going it, in your playhouse talk."

"Ah, I pitched it rayther bright, you may swear."

"What a soft one she must be!"

"I should say she was; it really quite hurt me. Pretty cretur, if it hadn't been for keepin' up the respectable covey, I could ha' kissed her."

"Yes, you'd better!" and the fair tripe-fryer did not look over-pleasant for the moment.

"Well, if women will be such fools as to go tell all their pedigree in a pawn-shop, what are they to look for?"

"Oh! Jimmy, Jimmy Lowther, you brick! there aint a clever' cove, no, not in London streets, I don't care who the other is." To be continued.

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THE PHYSICIAN'S VISIT.

It is not only for the sick man—it is for his friends that the doctor comes; his presence is often as good for them as for the patient, and they long for him yet more eagerly. How we have all watched after him! What an emotion the thrill of his carriage-wheels in the street, and at length at the door, has made us feel! How we hang upon his words! And what a comfort we get from a smile or two, if he can vouchsafe that sunshine to lighten our darkness! Who hasn't seen the mother prying into his face, to know if there is hope for the sick infant that cannot speak, and that lies yonder, its little frame battling with fever? Ah, how she looks into his eyes! What thanks if there is light there!—what grief and pain if he casts them down, and dares not say "hope!" Or is it the house-father who is stricken? The terrified wife looks on, while the physician feels his patient's wrist, smothering her agonies, as the children have been called upon to stay their plays and their talk. Over the patient in the fever, the wife expectant, the children unconscious, the doctor stands as if he were Fate—the dispenser of life and death. He must let the patient off this time, the woman prays so for his respite! One can fancy how awful the responsibility must be to a conscientious man! how cruel the feeling that he has given the wrong remedy, or it might have been possible to do better! how harassing the sympathy with survivors, if the case is unfortunate! how immense the delight of victory!

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MUSIC AND POETRY.

It is worthy of remark, that though music and poetry have always been united in the earliest ideas of nations, and the oldest poems—even those of Homer—are said to have been sung by their author, yet, since the revival of literature in Europe, there has appeared no individual who was great in both departments. On the contrary, many persons eminent for poetical abilities have been regardless of music as an art; admiring more the simple peasant airs of their respective countries than the most elaborate opera or difficult sonata. Sir Walter Scott cared only for songs the words of which pleased him; Byron said that to him opera music seemed only a succession of extraordinary sounds; and Goethe listened to nothing with such pleasure as the old songs and hymns of Germany. Philosophers have rarely been partial to artistic displays of music. Lamorte used to say that "life was too short to expend part of it in learning to make a noise."

AN ASPIRATION.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

I.

O may my soul be like those flowers
That open in their fragrant bowers
Alike at night and day—
So that their leaves are blest by all
The effluences that fall
From sun or starry ray!

II.

Let not my spirit bask alone
Beneath fair Fortune's brightest zone,
But also take the cloud,
Knowing that even there some light
Must glorify its brooding night
From Heaven's high temple bowed.

III.

O thus by Time's fast flowing wave,
My spirit reverent and brave
And trusting HIM, shall be!
Thus shall I win a chartered right
To that unchanging, cloudless light
Of clear Eternity!

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SNOWED UP AMONG WOLVES.

BY EMERSON BENNETT.

“I suppose you saw some pretty hard times when you first settled in the Western country?” I once said to an old pioneer.

“Indeed I did, sir!” he replied, with the look of one who is taking a retrospective view. “I am an old man now, and my hair, you see, is white—but it was as black as coal on the night I was snowed up among wolves. Ah, me! that was a terrible night, sir! and I never think of it, but I involuntarily shudder at the recollection, and thank God that I was so wonderfully preserved through it.”

“Can I not prevail on you to tell me the story?”

“Oh, yes, I will tell it to you, as I have told it to many others before you—so many, in fact, that I have it quite by heart—though if I had never mentioned the matter from that day to this, I am certain I should have no trouble now in recalling the minutest detail, so strongly are the facts impressed upon my memory.

“It was just after the war of 1812, that I got married and took my wife to a purchase I had made from government, within what is now the limits of the State of Illinois. The Indians, previous to this time, had been somewhat troublesome to the settlers in that region; but after peace was declared, they buried the hatchet, and we no longer had any occasion to fear them in the vicinity where I located myself.

“When I had built my cabin and moved into it, with the few housekeeping articles I had brought from the eastward, everything around me looked gloomy enough, and my poor wife sat down and had a hearty crying spell from sheer home-sickness. I laughed at her, and talked largely of what I was going to do, and all that sort of thing; but, to tell you the honest truth, I felt a good deal more like crying than laughing myself. Our nearest neighbor was ten miles distant; the only mill where we could get grinding done was fifteen; all the stock I had in the world were the two horses which had drawn us and our effects out there, and one of these was blind and the other lame; while, to crown all, I had no money, and, besides seed grain, barely provisions enough to last us till early harvest.

“Now I suppose you would like to ask, what made me fool enough to venture into a new country and set up housekeeping under such circumstances; and I will answer you, that I was young, strong, poor and ambitious, and I thought, and so did my wife, that this would be the only way we could ever gain an independence.

“Well, things were not so bad as they might have been; and I consoled myself with the reflection that we were a great deal better off than a good many others who had settled in the wilderness before us. My farm was about half woodland and half prairie—a rich, alluvial soil—and so, without being obliged to clear the ground first, I could proceed to plow, plant, and sow at once, which I did, it being the right season of the year for the work.

“We got through the summer very well, all things considered, and our crops were such as to make both of us look forward with a degree of cheerfulness and hope. My wife, though not exactly contented and happy, had got over her first severe attack of home-sickness, and, using all the philosophy and reason she was master of, had become as resigned to her lot as I could expect. When I was with her, she generally seemed quite cheerful; but I had to be away more or less; and during my absence she became timid and low-spirited, always fearful that something would happen to me. For this reason I made it a point, no matter where I went, to either take her with me, or return home the same night, even though I might not get in till late.

“One pleasant morning, late in the fall, I mounted my blind horse and set off for the mill, to get a grist I had left there, as was the custom, a week before, telling my wife I had not the least doubt I should be back before dark.

“‘And if you are not, Peter,’ she said, ‘you know I shall be terribly frightened, and shall sit trembling by my lone fire till I hear your voice.’

“Poor Nancy! she little knew how many long hours she would sit trembling alone before she would see me again; and little did I dream what perils and sufferings would be mine before I should again cross the threshold of my humble dwelling.

“I took my rifle and hunting-knife with me, hoping, as had sometimes occurred, I might get a shot at a deer; and if not, there were more or less bears and wolves about, and now and then some straggling Indians, and it was always best to go prepared for whatever one might chance to encounter.

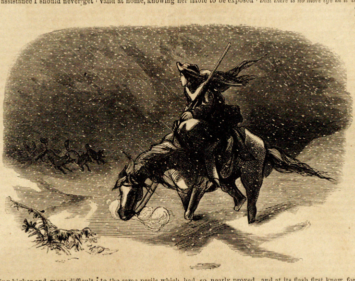
“I reached the mill long before noon, and, had my grist been ready, I could easily have got home, as I had promised, before dark; but it was not yet ground; and when I told the miller how disappointed I was, and that we had not meal enough in the house for more than two days, he said if I would wait he would try and have a bushel or so ready for me by four o'clock. I thought of my timid wife, and lonely ride in the dark, and half resolved to go home at once and return the next day; but then, besides that it seemed foolish to make an entire journey again to save a few hours, there was by this time every appearance of a quick-gathering storm, and it might be impossible to get back for the grist before we should be actually suffering for the want of bread: so, all things being duly considered, I concluded to wait.

“Now, as bad luck would have it, something went wrong with the mill; and instead of getting my grist by four o'clock, as promised, I was detained till near eight; by which time such a furious snow-storm was raging, that the miller advised me, as a matter of safety, to remain till morning, saying I might get into an impassible drift and lose my life.

“‘No,’ said I, thinking of my poor, anxious wife, trembling for fear in her loneliness, ‘I shall make the attempt at all hazards.’

“I had a strip of woodland to go through for the first five miles, and I thought that bad enough, I assure you; but it was as nothing in comparison with the open plain, or prairie, which stretched away before me for ten miles, to my very door. Wildly the wind howled and moaned among the trees, it is true; yet they served to break its force, and in a measure protect me, as I guided my blind, stumbling horse along the path which the light of the snow enabled me to see; but when I reached the plain, the storm burst upon me in all its terrible fury, filled my eyes, cut my face, chilled my blood, almost blew me down, and piled the snow in drifts and ridges higher than my head.

“I stopped and prayed—for somehow I felt that without God's assistance I should never get through and behold my dear wife again—and then I set forward with the child-like reliance of one who has acknowledged his weakness and committed himself to the care and guidance of a Superior Power. For a short distance I continued to ride; but I soon found this would not do, for, besides the fact that I could scarcely keep my position, and felt my limbs and body getting numb with the piercing cold, my poor horse was beginning to stagger from the force of the wind and his load together; so I got down and led him forward, both of us stumbling more or less on the clear ground, and plunging and wallowing through the high drifts, which were every minute growing higher and more difficult to surmount.



“In this manner I had got over, as nigh as I could judge, about three miles of prairie, when there came to my ears, borne along by the rushing blast, the distant howlings of a pack of wolves. Of all nights, such a night as this was the very one for these ravenous beasts to get the courage to attack a man, and my heart sunk and my legs trembled. Had there been nobody except myself to think about, I could have put a pretty bold face on the matter, even from the first; but the thought of my poor Nancy being left alone to mourn for me, and perhaps starve to death and die by slow agonies, seemed to take away all my hope, strength, and courage; and when, a minute after, I stumbled and fell into a drift, I lay there for some time, hearing the storm roar and the wolves howl still louder, and thinking I might as well die one way as another.

“But all at once, as I lay there, trembling like a frightened hare, it occurred to me that I was acting the coward and fool both. I was not dead yet, and why should I die before my time came, without striking a blow in self-defence? With this I jumped up, shook off the snow from myself and rifle, beat my arms and hands against my breast to get some warmth into them, and then reprimed my piece, and fixed my knife where I could grasp and use it in an instant.

“By the time all this was done, the noise of the wolves had come a good deal nearer, and my poor blind horse, as if he knew what a bloody fate was awaiting him, snorted, cowered and trembled, but not being able to see, he did not attempt to run away. At first I thought of leaving him to appease the hunger of the beasts, while I made my escape on foot; but it was by no means certain I could escape in this way, and besides, it seemed absolutely necessary that I should take the meal home with me; and so, after a little consideration, I resolved to mount him and make the best defence I could. I got upon his back upon my knees, threw the bridle over one arm, covered my rifle as well as I could, and there, with the storm howling past, and the snow fairly drifting over me in sheets, I waited in terrible suspense the onset of my foes.

“I did not have to wait long before I saw their eyes shining like coals of fire all around me, and heard, above the awful roar of the tempest, their barkings, snarlings and growlings, as they danced about, leaping and tumbling over each other, one minute venturing up close, and then falling back in alarm as I shouted to frighten them, but all the time getting bolder and bolder, till I saw the struggle must come soon. My poor, trembling horse could not protect himself in the least; for besides, as I have said, that he could not see, he was now imbedded in a drift, one-half of which had snowed up round him after he had stopped; and though, if the wolves had not been present, I might, perhaps, have worked him out of this, yet I doubt if he could have got out alone, or that I could have ever got him home alive in any case.

“Well, the work of destruction soon began, by some of the boldest of the beasts plunging into the drift, and seizing upon the horse before and behind at the same time. He shrieked, and reared, and plunged, and kicked, and it was a marvel that I was not thrown from his back and destroyed before him. I clung to him for a short time, unable to either shout or use my rifle as a club, and believing my last minute was at hand, and then, somehow, by a sudden impulse, I sprung to my feet, and jumped from his back, as far as I could, into the deepest part of the snow. I went down like plunging into water, and the next instant the sweeping blast had covered me with a white mantle, that I only hoped would be my winding-sheet, if it would save me from the fangs of the monsters that were now tearing my horse to pieces.

“For what seemed an age to me, the ravenous beasts remained at their bloody work—snarling, growling and fighting—and every minute of this time I was expecting them to pounce upon me, and I kept my knife in one hand, prepared to sell my life dearly. I had my rifle with me, too, but this was of no use, except to thrust out through the white wall of my prison, and so open an air-hole, from time to time, through which I could breathe. Except my fear of the wolves attacking me, I did not feel so very uncomfortable in my strange quarters; and when, at last, I became sensible by the sounds that the animals were gradually dispersing, slinking away one after another, my poor heart took a great bound with hope, and I thanked God with my whole soul for his kind Providence in preserving me.

“It was a long, a terribly long and trying night after that, as I remained there buried in the snow, constantly changing my position, rubbing my legs, arms, hands and body, forcing open a breathing hole, rousing myself from a drowsiness whose sleep would have been death, listening to the shrieking and howling storm above me, and thinking of my poor, distracted wife at home—it was a terribly long night, indeed, but I lived through it, and fervently thanked God to see the storm abate with the dawn of day.

“Though only seven miles to my cabin, it took me six hours of hard labor to reach it, and then I fell into the arms of my almost frantic wife, completely exhausted, and with some of my limbs so frosted that I was not able to leave the house again for months. Terrible as was the journey to the mill, my poor wife was obliged to make it alone, a few days after, to get meal to keep us from starving, and you can fancy what were my feelings, while left an invalid at home, knowing her liable to be exposed to the same perils which had so nearly proved fatal to me! Ah, sir, it is indeed with truth I can say, I saw some pretty hard times when I first settled in the western country.”

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THOUGHTS AS THEY OCCUR.----No. 88.

BY ONE WHO KEEPS HIS EYES AND EARS OPEN.

It is conceded now, by vegetable physiologists, that plants have a real *life:*—not by a figure of speech; not a slight analogy of life; but a real vegetable life, which connects them with the long chain of more perfectly developed life above them. This it is a great comfort to know. Life without passions! Life without selfishness, envyings, jealousy, supplantings, or hatred! It may, to some, seem a little tame to have such an incompetent life. And, without a doubt, it would be a poor substitute for the higher animal life. But, *with* it, and as one department in the great realm of organic life, it is intensely interesting to see a development, if not of *beings*, yet of living agents, without wills, affections, or passions, producing such a round of magnificent effects as is found in the Vegetable Kingdom.

But, to a sensitive imagination, the belief of this life-principle works increased tenderness toward flowers. They are now relatives—if not country cousins, yet remote kindred! We plant them with some sense of the dignity of *seeds!* We nurse and tend them as if they were infant children. We begin to transfer to them the experience of human life. They must eat. They must drink. They must perspire. They must be kept clean. They must sleep, breathe, excrete, and, in short, perform all functions of supply, repair, and development.

But may we not *imagine*, now, that, as there is a vegetable *life*, so there is a vegetable *soul*, which bears to our higher human soul about the same relation that the vegetable life-principle does to the animal life-principle?

Is it so difficult to imagine, (for we suggest it as a mere fancy,) that flowers represent different *dispositions?* In human experience disposition springs from affections or sentiments. But flowers do not *think* or *feel*. *Beauty* seems the end of their life. Their souls, if they have any, must be regarded as a modification of this element of *beauty*. And as, when we speak of a *person's* disposition, we think of conscious and voluntary feeling, so, when we speak of a *flower's* disposition, we should think of some tendency or active reaching toward beauty, in some of its innumerable combinations.'

What the range of such a life is, it is impossible for one to conceive. It must not be measured by *our* estimate of beauty, nor by analogies with our sort of life. Men are supreme egotists. They regard nothing as of value that does not in some way measure itself by *them*. But Beauty has relatively but a small function in human life. It would seem to play a higher part in the economy of the Universe. If the profusion of things beautiful, the varieties of beauty, the creation of beauty outside of all human recognition,—as in shells under the wave, in fish, in insects that live in wood or earth, in the tropical life, where the most gorgeous displays are least witnessed, in hyperborean beauty, crystaline, in snow-forms and frost-etchings—be considered, it is plain that *beauty* is developed in this world on account of the taste or want, or love of the organizing and creating mind, rather than for the immediate necessity or use of the human race. Thus, a civilized man, living among Indians, might sit for years, occupying his leisure in writing his meditations and observations, and pouring out the elements of a noble life without its having relation to the consciousness or occupation of those among whom he outwardly dwelt. So God may be pouring out a noble life, written in elements of beauty, beneath, above, around, and within human life, and yet, in so far as we are concerned, little or not at all recognized!

In such a view flowers may be said to live to God, more than to men! And if they are effecting a divine mission, and are having a relation to the Divine mind, they may have more of a soul-life than we think or dream of. Judged by *our* standard, birds have very poor language. But is the human idea of language the fit one by which to measure bird-language? Is there no listening except through our ears? Is there no back-realm, no invisible sphere through which musical sounds move and beauty gleams, more freely, easily, and copiously, than through the opaque elements of human life? And precisely the same thought applies to *form*, *color*, and *odor* in flower-life.

How easily, then, may we imagine that flowers are set to develop, in this world, another and entirely different experiment of life, having its peculiar elements, its relations more directly with God and spirits than with men, and discovered to men only so far as our gross senses can recognize them. Flowers, as such, can present themselves to only two doors of the mind—to sight and smell. The ear has nothing to do with them. Touch and taste are related to them in no way that discriminates them from everything else. The eye and the nose at once, and they only, recognize the flower as differing from all other objects.

In short, these most exquisite organizations that have so very slight a hold on human life, have been created and spread with a divine care and wisdom, in such profusion, and are so full of creative thought and taste, as to compel us to infer that they answer a purpose quite beyond the ordinary ideas of men. Other beings are being ministered to besides men. As our eye glances over a meadow purpled with June, it does not follow that all this gorgeous life rises and expends itself for us, alone or chiefly, or *that there is no more life in it than so much as our coarse senses perceive.* Flowers have a life that ministers chiefly in another direction. They are sent to do God's work in unrevealed paths, and to diffuse influence by channels that we hardly suspect. A lighthouse, upon a promontory, jutting far out into the sea, cannot tell its keeper what it has been doing all night. While he slept it burned on. It flashed its beams far out along the beaded crests of waves, and fell upon the eye of the watcher,—on an Indiaman, returned from months of sailing out of sight of land,—to tell him where he is, and how near to his port. It cheered some storm-tossed mariner that had lost his reckoning, and at its flash first knew, for many days, where he was. It warned many a sail, that then stood off from perilous shoals. It confirmed and cheered many a navigator that, as it sent its beams forth to him, knew that his calculations were right. And so, all night long, its long-silent beams shot forth into the darkness, conveying mute lessons and tidings to a hundred ocean craft, and yet it kept no journal, and made no report of its doings; and when, in the morning, the keeper arose to trim his dying lamps, he knew nothing of all the mysterious signalings that had been going on; messages of life and death, sent on beams of light through the darkness, to passers-by on the far-off sea.

Has God no lights and signals? Has the unkindled glow of Beauty no relation to those that pass by us through the invisible realm? Do we that look upon the kindled flowers, imagine what they have done, or are doing, to eyes that watch from afar? Because their life is not one fitted to commune with us, have they no life and communion the other way?

Flowers may beckon toward us, but they speak toward heaven and God!

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

[All the Questions under this head are actually received by us through the mail. We state this because we learn that many persons have supposed some of them to be *manufactured* for the purpose of adapting the answers to them. They are all genuine, written evidently in good faith, and answered to the best of our ability.]

A. H.—A divorce can only be obtained on application to the Supreme Court of the State. A mere agreement of separation, signed by a man and his wife, even if done in good faith, and with a full knowledge of the contents of the document, is of no legal avail, and does not absolve the parties in the least from the legal obligations of the marriage contract. A man who marries again during the lifetime of his first wife, without being legally divorced from her, or unless she has been absent from him five successive years, and he believes her to be dead, is guilty of bigamy. The first marriage is still in full force, but the fact of the husband's living with another woman would be a sufficient ground for granting a divorce to the first wife, upon her application to the proper court, provided that *she* had not been guilty of any inconstancy, and did not connive at this second marriage for the purpose of obtaining a divorce. A divorce granted to the first wife would not legalize the second marriage of the husband, which is void of itself without any decree of court, nor would he, under such circumstances, be permitted to marry again during the lifetime of the first wife. There may be important and controlling circumstances connected with your case which you have not stated. You should consult some competent lawyer in regard to the matter.

KENTUCKY.—This correspondent asks “if a gentleman should engage a lady to attend a resort of pleasure with him, and she should carry with her a beautiful bouquet, would it be showing proper respect for his feelings for her to present it to another gentleman in his presence, or to ask him to deliver it to the other gentleman himself?” A lady certainly has a right to present a bouquet to whomsoever she pleases; but should she do so, under the circumstances mentioned by our correspondent, she would exhibit a lamentable deficiency in tact, and do violence to the highest rules of good-breeding.

WILLARD wishes to know “if it is right or proper for a young lady, who is engaged, to seek the company of, or even recognize another, who has done all he possibly can to injure her accepted suitor by telling her that he is guilty of the lowest practices, which she says she does not believe, but yet keeps on terms of intimacy with the author of the reports?” We think not. A true-hearted girl would not, for a moment, tolerate the slanderer of her affianced lover.

G. V. C.—If there is no provision in the will relative to the matter, a young lady cannot receive property which is bequeathed to her until she is twenty-one. Her guardian is intrusted with the management of her estate until she attains that age; but she is entitled to receive from him out of her property sufficient means for her support and education.

P. L. says he attended church with a young lady, where they had to take seats upon opposite sides of the church, as that was the custom. When the service was about half over, the young lady left the church, without signifying to him to follow. He, therefore, kept his seat; and now he wishes to know if he had not just cause for offence. Not the least in the world.

BYRON.—Wait until you are in a position to marry. If you are engaged, time will only test the strength of your attachment; and as the young lady supports herself well, you should leave her in that position rather than marry her, when you have no employment and nothing upon which to support a wife.

SOUTH.—Not being a member of the family, but only a caller upon the young lady, you should not have “answered the door-bell,” even if it was rung twice before the young lady made her appearance. The same would have been true had the bell been rung a dozen times.

CLARA.—If her parents or guardian consent, we see no impropriety in a young lady of fourteen accompanying a gentleman of twenty-eight to the opera or other place of amusement.

T. T. wishes to know in what year the second century commenced. The first century was completed when the first hundred years had elapsed, consequently the second century must have commenced in the year 101.

INQUIRER.—We do not know whether a young lady can obtain a situation as type setter in this city or not; the compensation would of course depend upon the terms of the agreement made.

D. M.—Yes. A person can become a lawyer without a knowledge of Greek or “other foreign languages except Latin.” Your knowledge of Latin will be very serviceable, but the Greek is not of much consequence.

A. G. P. (Jersey City.)—You are correct. A. T. Stewart, the great merchant prince of this city, was born in Ireland. He is of what is popularly known as Scotch-Irish origin.

J. B.—This correspondent writes to us that her sister was formerly employed in a store, but became sick and unable to attend to the duties of her position. During her illness the superintendent of the establishment “came almost daily to see her,” and was very assiduous in his attentions; but being a married man, he appeared to be only a warm friend to them, and they treated him as such. As her sister became convalescent he invited her to ride with him, and to go to the theatre, opera, and other places of amusement, all of which invitations were declined. His visits, however, became more frequent than propriety would admit of, and he was admonished to discontinue them, or to call less frequently. One evening on returning home, she beheld through the window blind, her sister seated upon the sofa beside this “friend,” with his arm around her, and her head resting upon his shoulder. On charging him with it, and telling him plainly what she thought of him, he said that “there was no harm in it, that people did not all think alike upon the subject, and he should not care if his own wife and daughter did the same.” She wishes to know our “ideas upon the character of this friend,” and what course she had better pursue. Our ideas are that this man is a cunning and unscrupulous villain, who is seeking to blast the reputation of your sister, and that the less you have to do with him the better it will be for you all. No honorable person in his position, from motives of friendship, would conduct himself in that manner, and your sister is very culpable indeed to permit such conduct. If she persists in her infatuation, she will be terribly undeceived in the end. You should peremptorily order him to discontinue his visits, and, if he persists in his attempts, call in his wife to your aid.

WEEHAWKEN.—Your confusion arises from the fact that the London Times has been owned and conducted by *three* successive John Walters. The first John Walter died in 1803, after having managed the paper for eighteen years. The second and greatest of the name was the proprietor from 1803 to the time of his death in 1847; during which period the Times became the great newspaper it now is. It was this John Walter who was the first to apply the power of steam to printing a newspaper; an improvement which cost a vast amount of money and patience to bring into successful operation. No man less resolute and intelligent than John Walter could have accomplished this splendid enterprise. The third John Walter, who now conducts the Times, succeeded his father in 1847, and adheres closely to the plans and principles of his illustrious progenitor. He is a Member of Parliament, as his father was before him.

P. R. R.—Babylon was built in the form of a parallelogram, and was about twenty miles in length and twelve miles in breadth, the circumference being about sixty miles. It consisted of fifty streets, twenty-five running each way, and crossing each other at right angles, thus dividing the city into 625 squares. Notwithstanding its great size, the population was only about 600,000. This disparity between size and population is accounted for by the fact that the houses were only one story in hight, and would consequently accommodate but a few inhabitants each, compared with the lofty dwellings of modern cities. Besides, contiguous to the walls, and throughout their whole extent, there was a wide, vacant space, while the Hanging Gardens, Temple of Belus, and other public edifices, occupied a vast extent of ground.

BOSTON.—When a young man gives presents to a young lady, they belong to her, and he cannot recover them unless she chooses to return them, even if “she had another suitor all the time.” Honor and a proper spirit of independence would prompt a person to return them under such circumstances, but a young lady who encourages the attentions of one person, and receives presents from him, when she has another lover, would not be likely to possess either of those incentives. You should be sure, however, that the other suitor *is* an accepted lover, and that her conduct is duplicity, and not an indication of favor toward yourself.

M.—It is probably true, as has of late been frequently asserted, that some persons are addicted to the use of arsenic for the purpose of clearing the complexion, and it is said to have the desired effect. Commencing with a very small dose, it is gradually increased until a quantity which would seem incredible may be taken with impunity. It *is* dangerous suddenly to relinquish the use of it, as the system becomes so accustomed to the stimulant, that the reaction is generally fatal, and the victim dies exhibiting all the phenomena of death by poison.

ENGLISH.—The Star-Chamber was named from the Hebrew word shetar, (pronounced shtar,) meaning a deed or contract. The old Jewish deeds in England were written on parchment in Hebrew on one side and Latin on the other. By a statute of Richard I. these deeds, or “shetars,” were collected and mostly deposited in one of the rooms of the exchequer, and in that chamber this celebrated court was held, from which it took its name. The court was abolished by Charles I. just preceding the English revolution, in which he was dethroned and beheaded.

J. P. M.—There is no such word as “unbeknown;” that is, it is never used by a writer of repute, nor can it be found in any dictionary. Instead of saying, “He left unbeknown to his parents,” say, He left without his parents knowing it, or his departure was unknown to his parents. With regard to writing the words, *can* and *not*, as though they were but one, it is merely a custom. In parsing a sentence, the word *cannot* is to be separated into its component parts.

L. C. L.—There is no question that Whitfield, the celebrated preacher, was a very good and perfectly sincere man. The author quoted by you doubted his greatness merely. Whitfield was not a great man; his written sermons are not at all eloquent or remarkable. His power lay in his earnestness, and the wonderfully penetrating pathos of his voice. He had one of the most perfect voices for an orator that was ever heard.

WATER ST.—Port is the strongest of all wines. Good, pure port contains from twenty to twenty-four hundredths of alcohol. Madeira and sherry are next to port in point of strength, and not much inferior to it. The weakest wines are Champaigne, Burgundy and Rhine wine, which average about half the strength of port. Some Rhine wine has less than one-fourth the strength of port.

T. M. F.—The family of Louis Philippe reside still in England, and occupy one of the palaces of Queen Victoria. None of the family have ever been in the service of Louis Napoleon. We have no doubt they expect again to live in the Tuileries as the reigning family, and considering the nature of the French people, their expectation is not so ill-founded as it may at first thought appear.

LA NORMA.—It is a strange fact that neither the day nor the place of the Duke of Wellington's birth is certainly known. His mother said he was born on the first of May, 1769; but the register of St. Peter's Church, Dublin, contains a record of his baptism on the thirtieth of April, 1769. He was probably born at Mornington House in Dublin.

AMICUS.—Gen. Taylor left his camp at Corpus Christi March 11, 1846, and arrived opposite Matamoras on the 28th of March, at which time we may date the commencement of the Mexican war. The treaty of peace of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed February 2nd, 1848, so that the war lasted not quite two years.

H. F.—We see no impropriety in your writing to the young lady's parents, asking them for the hand of their daughter. There is no set form in which to make the request; all you have to do is to state in a clear and manly way who you are and what you desire.

G. M. T.—The lines which you refer to, and which were quoted in regard to the story of “Maggie Burns” in the LEDGER, are a portion of a poem entitled “Washington Crossing the Delaware,” which has been set to music. Any music-dealer can get the piece for you.

AURORA.—No. We do not think it would be unladylike for you to ride on horseback in the country, unattended by a gentleman. It is one of the best, healthiest, and pleasantest modes of exercise there is, and a trifling scruple should not deprive you of the benefit of it.

CLUB.—The stuff called absinthe, which some roué Frenchmen are accustomed to drink in order to restore to their exhausted systems a momentary vitality, is merely a very powerful and poisonous tonic. The word absinthium, from which absinthe is derived, means wormwood.

LAWYER.—The poet Wordsworth had a small property of his own, but his chief support was derived from an office which he held, the salary of which was £300 a year. Toward the close of his life he derived some emolument from his poems. He left a considerable estate.

LUCY.—We do not think that “*shaving off the superfluous hair with a poisoned razor*” will prevent its reappearance, but should you happen to cut yourself with such an instrument during the operation, it might prove a serious affair.

INQUIRER.—We cannot advise you. This notion of looking about for a wife as you would for a horse or a cow, is to us quite revolting. Love first; then think of marriage.

DEACON.—If you are *engaged* to the young lady, we see no objection to your consulting her in regard to your future prospects.

B. B. B.—No one is excluded from the communion table of the Episcopal Church. The whole responsibility is thrown upon the communicant.

MILITARY.—A Major General takes precedence of a Brigadier General in rank.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our nex.*